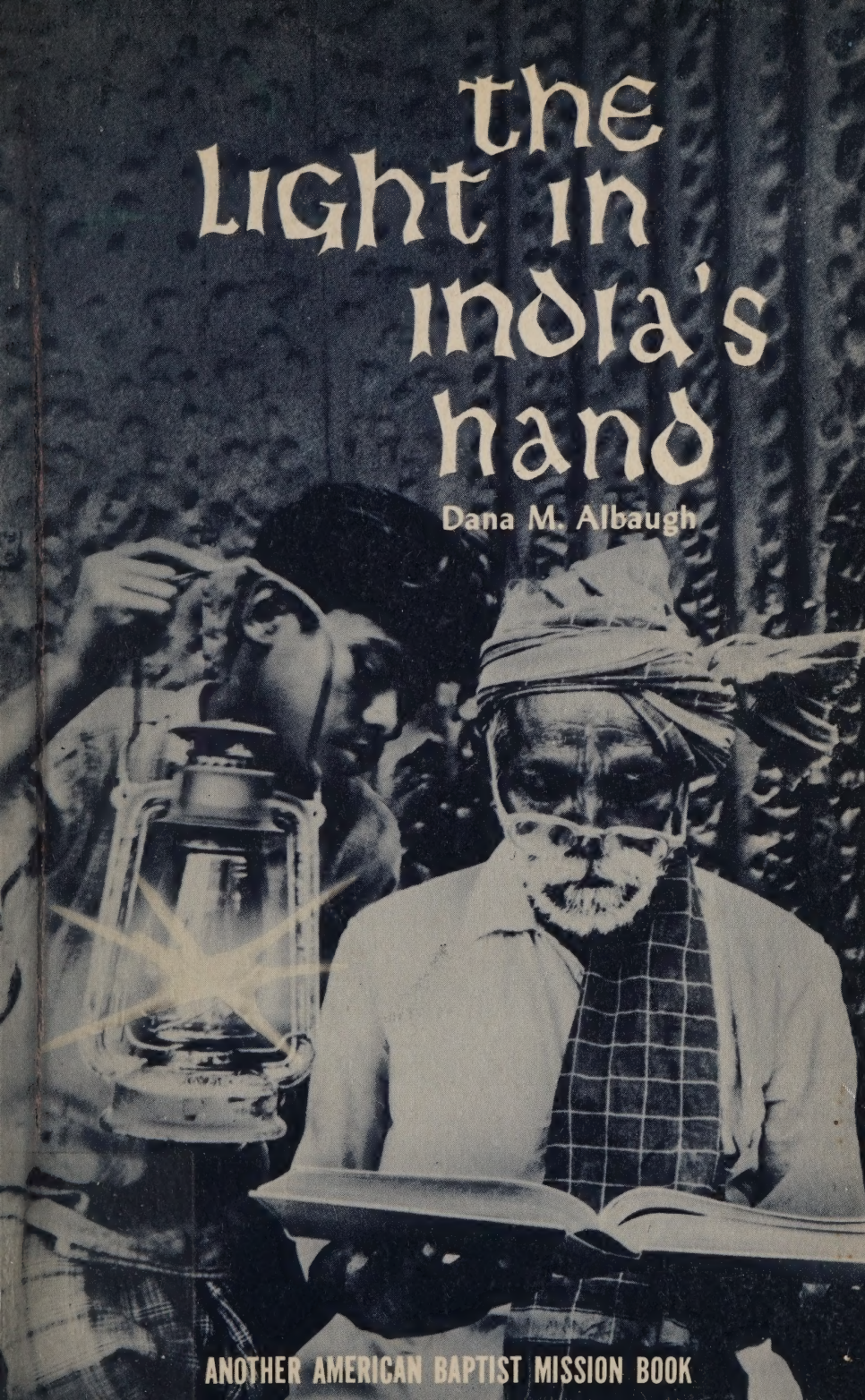
the light in india's hand

Dana M. Albaugh



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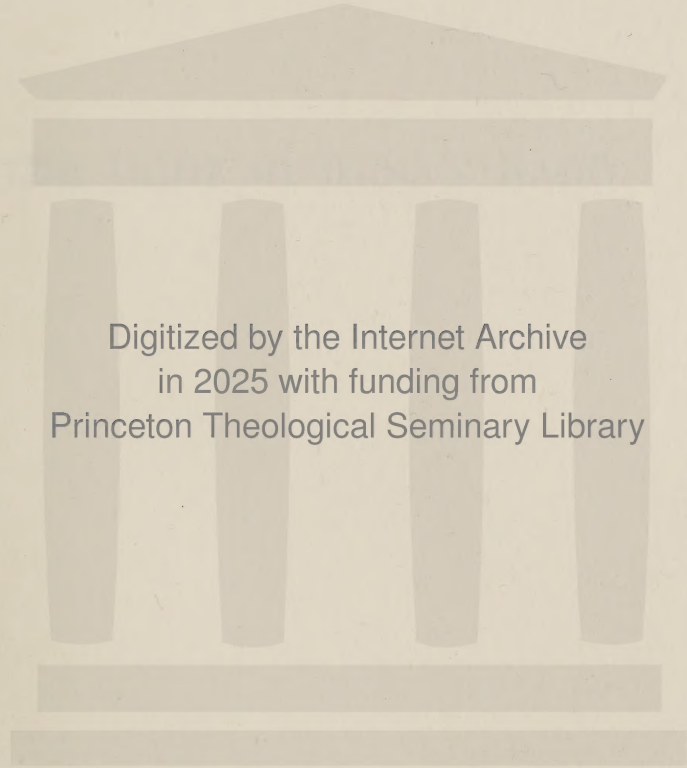
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D. Gillespie

the light in india's hand

This volume is inscribed

to the

Indian Christians and the missionaries

whose achievements are most faithfully recorded

in their

noble lives and deeds.

the light in india's hand

by dana m. albaugh

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THE LIGHT IN INDIA'S HAND

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preface

THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY of the founding of four missions, Assam, Bengal-Orissa, South India, and South China, by the Baptists of America was observed in 1936. It was the privilege of the author to recall some of the events of those early days in his first volume, entitled *Between Two Centuries.*

Now more than twenty-five years have elapsed. Events of tremendous significance have taken place in this relatively brief interval. The South China Mission is closed and the mainland of China is under the dominance of communistic powers. No longer are American Baptists in China, to encourage and cooperate with Chinese Christian leaders in the tasks of the church.

Fortunately, the picture in India is a different one. Changes of a cataclysmic nature have taken place which affect every phase of life. The India that was under British rule twenty-five years ago is now a free and independent republic, holding the balance of power in the East. Under India's democratic laws Christianity still has freedom of expression. Christian missionaries continue to have their place in the Indian scene.

Herein, it is one purpose to trace briefly the political and religious history of this ancient land, recalling the contribution Baptists of America have been privileged to make during the last one hundred and twenty-five years. We shall find that in politics, in religion, and in social development the light of leadership has been passed from one outstanding personality to another. Moreover, Christians of many nationalities and backgrounds have played their role.

Today, the Light is in India's hand. Indian Christian churches and leaders are engaged in carrying the light of the Christian Word to the unreached corners of India's thought and life. It will be a further purpose of this book to explore the ways in which Christians of America can continue to exert their witness in India, and thus share in this task.

The rich and fascinating history of India and the sacrificial contribution of the missionary pioneers are passed over all too hastily. It is hoped, however, that enough background is offered in this book to stimulate further interest and study of the peoples of this vast subcontinent, and to deepen the appreciation of Baptists for the Indian people and their accomplishments.

The writer is indebted to many friends and colleagues. The priceless pages of authors of other years have furnished invaluable historical materials. Curator E. C. Starr, of the Library of the American Baptist Historical Society at Rochester, N. Y., and Mrs. Joseph Heartberg, a Baptist who is a member of the staff of the Englewood, N. J., Public Library, have been extremely helpful. I also wish to express my appreciation to Frank T. Hoadley of the American Baptist Publication Society, to William J. Keech of the Board of Education, to V. E. Devadutt of Colgate Rochester Divinity School, to M. D. Farnum and Ada P. Stearns and my other colleagues in the American Baptist Foreign Mission Societies for their review of the manuscript and their valuable suggestions. The Board of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society has graciously made time available, relieving me from other duties so that I might engage in the necessary detailed research. A special word of thanks should also go to the members of the secretarial staff who have worked so faithfully on the many typings of the manuscript, particularly Miss Estelle Kelsey of the New York office of the Societies.

Dana M. Albaugh
New York

October 23, 1962

Contents

Preface · 5

1
Gandhi's Mantle · 9

2
How India Got Her Religions · 33

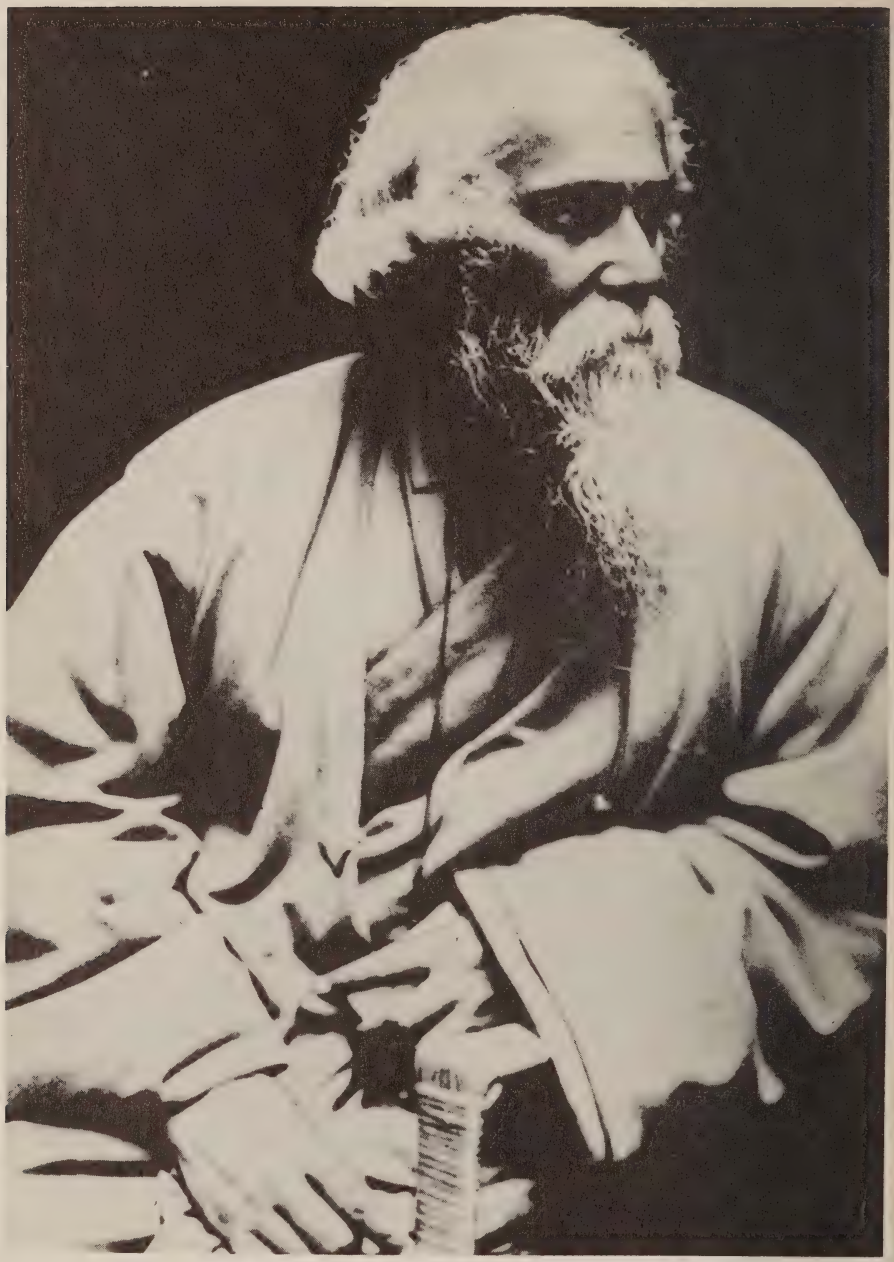
3
Baptist Pioneers in India · 50

4
American Baptists at Work in India · 68

5
Vanishing Guideposts and New Trails · 78

6
Shall American Baptists Quit India? · 96

7
What of the Future? · 117



Courtesy Information Service of India

Rabindra Nath Tagore.

1

Gandhi's mantle

A HEAVILY VEILED MUSLIM woman is standing at a table in an improvised election booth in India. Seated before her are two registrars checking their long lists of Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh names. The woman is exercising her recently acquired right to vote and it is her first experience at the ballot box. It is early in 1952, when the newly independent Republic of India is only five years old. In spite of the lack of many years of experience, this vast subcontinent of India is in the midst of what has been called "the greatest mass voting experience in history."[1] The Republic is holding its first national elections embracing an electorate of 176,000,000 people.

The election is not held on a single day, as is customary in the United States, but over a period of four months, from the middle of October, 1951, until its official ending on February 15, 1952. But even in late April, the returns will still be coming in from some of the Himalayan northlands that are always snowed in until March, as well as from the numerous villages in the parching heat of the southern plains.

Symbols on Ballot Boxes

The surprising thing about these elections is that they took place with efficiency, even though some seventy to eighty-five per cent of the electorate was unable to read or write. When the Muslim woman, one of this large number of illiterates, stepped into the booth, she first stated her name. Then she held out her left forefinger. On it, the elections official placed an indelible

[1] *Life,* Feb. 4, 1952, p. 28.

stamp indicating that her vote had been cast. She was then given a blank vote to place in the ballot box of her choice. But how would she know in which of the several containers to deposit her blank? For the months during the campaigning, each political party had been displaying its own peculiar, easily identified symbol. More than a million steel boxes had been made especially for the first election at a cost of Rs. 5 (5 rupees, $1.05) a box. Each bore the distinctive markings of one of the parties. Two yoked bullocks pulling together was the symbol of Prime Minister Nehru's Congress Party. Bicycles, boats, ladders, and scales were the visible signs of some of the independent parties. A banyan tree represented the Socialists, who proclaimed widely that their organization promised "shade and protection." A sickle reaping ears of grain was the token of the Communists, who appealed to the starving masses, particularly in the famine-stricken and poverty-ridden sections of Hyderabad and Andhra, where there had been a deficiency of rain for nearly six years.

The campaigning was carried on in many interesting ways. Voters' rallies sometimes attracted hundreds of thousands of people. One of Nehru's challengers was a bearded, saffron-robed Indian holy man who took a vow to remain silent throughout the campaign. This he did firmly, except on one occasion when it

India's Constitution: Preamble.
Photo by M. D. Farnum

is reported that he shouted three words. And no one seems to have recorded even these for the benefit of posterity!

Nehru's Congress Party gained a decisive victory in the 1952 elections. Yet, the Communists and the Socialists polled a sufficient percentage of the vote to make it clear that there would be serious opposition to a one-party state. The election put the dominant Congress Party on notice that agricultural deficiencies, political corruption, and divisions within the party must be recognized and remedied. Also it gave a warning that India must continue a program of agricultural development to satisfy the gnawing hunger of the many empty stomachs throughout her domain.

The election described above represented a critical turning point in India's history. For the past four decades India had been undergoing the social, economic, and industrial changes through which the United States and Europe passed in a corresponding number of centuries. The election illustrated graphically the contrasts between the old and the new in India's life which had been brought on by the transportation, technological, and political revolution of these last few decades.

For any mature understanding of the Christian church and its role in the life of modern India there must be an awareness of the agonizing revolutions, both material and spiritual, which have been affecting the daily life of the people of this amazing land. These changes are epitomized in the struggles and problems faced by Mohandas K. Gandhi, the George Washington of India, and by the current Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Mahatma Gandhi, National Hero

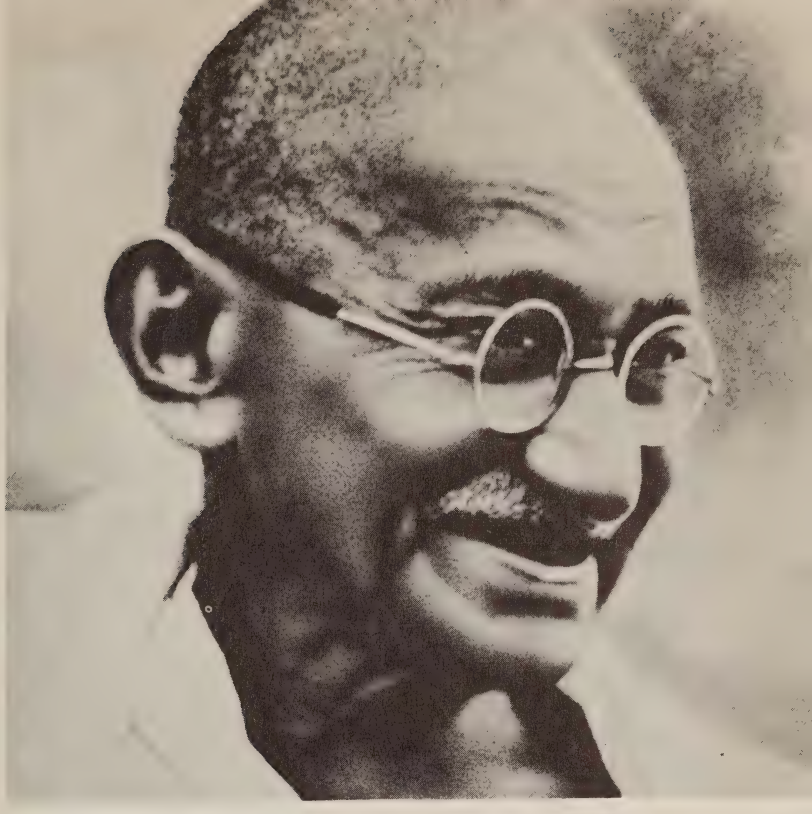
Mahatma Gandhi represents, as probably no other one man can, India's rise to independent status and her emergence as an Asiatic and world power. Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Western India into a well-to-do family of the Vaisya, or agricultural and merchant caste. His father was Chief Minister of the State of Porbandar. When Gandhi was eighteen years old he was sent by his family to England, where he studied law at Uni-

versity College in London. In 1893, Gandhi cast his lot with the large Indian community in South Africa, where he became a successful lawyer, politician, and leader in social reform. It was here, while representing the Indian minority community, that he became much impressed with passive resistance as a political technique and moral force. Returning to India in 1914, he began during the period of the First World War to wage his long struggle for Indian independence from Great Britain, using civil disobedience as his principal weapon. He became a member and later a leader of the Congress Party. By his frequent fasts he drew the attention of millions of Indians to the objectives of his campaign and thereby incurred the keen displeasure of the British Government.

Mohandas K. Gandhi was revered by millions, who bestowed on him the sobriquet of Mahatma, which means "great-souled one." It is a title given by the common people to those who are thought to be unusually wise and spiritually perceptive. To Hindus particularly, it implies an identity of concern on the part of its bearer for all mankind, without distinction of race, creed, color, or sex.

Gandhi was an enigma to most people. He lived primarily on raw vegetables, fruit, and goat's milk, and seldom ate anything cooked. He was a confirmed vegetarian and ate no meat. He shunned modern technology, and advocated a return to the spinning wheel and to the land. He felt that to do this would give more people employment and would furnish a natural symbol of independence. Thus, he rejected the machine age, modern industrialization, and science.

The Mahatma was a very religious man. He reserved Monday as a day of silence and fasting. He would stop for prayer in private, or in public without embarrassment, whenever he felt impelled. Poverty he regarded as a virtue. This was reflected in his own clothing, which most frequently consisted of a homespun cloth of the type used by the humblest peasants. He died at the hand of an assassin on January 30, 1948, while leading a prayer meeting in New Delhi, but not before Indian independence had



Courtesy Information Service of India

Mahatma Gandhi.

been achieved. The sacred Ganges River carried his ashes, but not his spirit, toward the sea. The legacy of his leadership can be seen in almost every one of the giant forward steps taken by India during the last decade. His spirit also lives in the person on whom he cast his mantle, Jawaharlal Nehru, of whom we shall later hear much more.

More than any other one thing, Gandhi's campaign and fasts focused attention on India's transition from a backward, underdeveloped colonial territory to a growing, modernized nation in a location which is strategic in Asia. The Republic of India, which gained its independence from Great Britain in 1947 after years of agitation and negotiation, faces issues that are almost overwhelming. Each of these vexing issues brings a deep concern to

the Christian agencies working in India and has a direct bearing on the approach, the methods, and the results of Christian work.

A Tangle of Tongues

One urgent problem is the variety and complexity of the languages spoken in India. *Newsweek* calls it a "Tangle of Tongues."[2] We who live in a nation like the United States where almost everyone speaks a common language can easily underestimate the divisive forces which persist where many languages are current. There are 141 easily recognized languages spoken on the Indian subcontinent, twenty-six of them being used by more than a half million people each. They may be classified as Indo-European, Dravidian and Tibeto-Chinese. Urdu is the language most widely used by Muslims. Languages spoken by fifteen million or more people are Hindi, Bengali, Bihari, Marathi, and Telugu. The Telugu language is spoken by approximately thirty-two million people. It is among the Telugus that American Baptists have a strong work in South India.

It was the British who first brought a common means of nationwide communication to India by training leaders and civil servants to speak the English language. When India's constitution was adopted in 1950, a goal was set to make Hindi the official state language within fifteen years. This decision was occasioned by the strong nationalistic feeling following World War II. More recently, however, Indian leaders have recognized that there were not sufficient textbooks in Hindi and that those that were lacking probably could not be completed in time to attain the goal. Also, Indian students and intellectuals continue to desire to learn English because it is more widely spoken and understood around the world. Furthermore, considerable bewilderment has been experienced in the attempt to translate modern scientific and technological terms into ancient languages such as Hindi and Bengali. Words like "caloric," "hormone," and "thermal" offer a real challenge. English transliterations will probably be incorporated into local languages and dialects. The future official language of

[2] *Newsweek*, Aug. 5, 1957.

India remains a matter of major policy upon which the Indian Government must eventually rule. The tangle of tongues presents special difficulties to Baptists in the states of Assam, Bengal, and Orissa, where many linguistic and cultural groups live in close proximity.

India's Large Worry

A featured article in the *New York Times Magazine*[3] refers to the population explosion as "India's Large Worry." The Republic of India has an area of a little more than a third of that of the United States. Yet, in the 1960 census, the population of India was more than two and one-half times that of the United States. The Ford Foundation reports that India's population in 1961 was 438 million.[4] The problem of meeting India's unfulfilled food needs for such a concentrated population is basic and tremendous. Unfortunately for India, most of the land that has been suitable for cultivation has been farmed for years with little knowledge of the restoration of fertility. The climate of the Indian Peninsula is subject to the variation of rainfall brought by the southwesterly winds, or the "inblowing monsoon" which begins in June and ends in late September or mid-October. In some years the rain is heavy. Frequently, however, large sections of the country are passed by for several years in succession with almost no rain. Because the country is largely agricultural, the dense population then suffers tragically.

In recent years the death rate in India has dropped markedly, due to better maternity and infant care, public health measures, and control of epidemics, such as cholera, plague, typhoid, and malaria. However, each year the population is increased by about fourteen million new arrivals. Births exceed deaths by more than eight million annually. This is a growth in one year nearly equal to the population of Greater New York City. Added to the complexity of India's other problems, the provision for housing and

[3] P. and P. Streit, "New Light on India's Large Worry." *New York Times Magazine,* March 13, 1960.

[4] Ford Foundation Report, *Roots of Change.* New York: November, 1961, p. 36.

feeding of these new arrivals is an almost insurmountable burden.

It is said that the average Indian woman at age forty-five has had six children. What are some of the reasons for these large families? In Hindu culture a son is greatly desired. He cares for the father and mother in their old age, and he presides over his father's funeral rites. He is the heir to the land. By tradition the family holding, even though it may be a small parcel, is divided among the male heirs. The presence of a son gives status in village life. Many families can remember when whole communities were wiped out by plague or smallpox. Thus, the larger the number of children the better the prospect for the survival of some. Even today in areas where medical resources are limited, one, two, or three of the children may die before reaching school age. In a real sense the security of the family and its future is involved.

In most of the rural villages life is routine. There are no service clubs, few home radios, no television, and no organized social life. The family is the important unit for work, recreation, and social affairs. The special events, such as marriages, births, and funerals, are occasions for feasting, religious celebration, and social fellowship. Whatever the reasons may be, the balance between food supply, durable goods, and population is exceedingly precarious and will continue to grow more so with the rapid increase in population unless production can be increased or the population growth slows down.

The Caste System

Another problem with which India has been struggling is the ancient caste system. Caste and Hinduism are linked closely together. The first clear exposition of caste seems to appear in the Code of Manu, the earliest known recension of which is dated somewhere between 200 B.C. and A.D. 200. Traditionally there are four main castes. These are (1) the Brahmans, the priestly and scholarly caste; (2) the Kshatriyas, the warrior and ruling caste; (3) the Vaisyas, the agricultural and merchant caste; and (4) the Sudra, the artisan caste. Over the years there has emerged

a fifth group, variously named the Harijans, panchamas, pariahs, untouchables, or outcastes.

These five groups are subdivided into nearly 2,500 smaller units, each of which possesses skills or duties of a specialized type. Each caste is to some extent a trade guild, a mutual assurance society, a religious sect, and the relic of a family distinction believed to have been based on color in the far-distant past. The corresponding Hindi word for caste is color. Caste divisions are associated with such occupations as farmers, blacksmiths, washermen, or barbers. Each may have its own peculiar religious rituals and dietary habits. Marriage within and between castes is governed by strict regulations.

One of the largest groups, numbering nearly seventy million, is the untouchables, or outcastes. They have traditionally performed the most menial and degrading types of labor. Many are leather workers. Since India is a land where, by religious tradition, animal life is sacred, the carcasses of dead animals are considered by the higher castes to be defiling, and must be processed and the skins prepared for utilitarian purposes by members of the outcastes. Others are the sweepers, whose principal work is to dispose of the village offal. Because of these contacts with what is generally regarded as degrading types of work, the outcastes are looked down upon, isolated, and restricted in their social relationships. From the earliest times on record, the outcastes were not permitted to use the wells, roads, or temples. They were forbidden by law to read or hear the recitation of the Hindu scriptures. Even their shadows were avoided by the higher castes as being a source of pollution.

Mahatma Gandhi was acutely aware of the plight of the untouchables and carried on a long and vigorous campaign to improve their lot. He called them Harijans, or "children of God." He became a hero to the outcastes and the depressed. There are clauses in the constitution of the Republic of India which abolish untouchability. In 1955 discrimination against untouchables was made an offense subject to punishment. In this respect, as well as in others, Gandhi's mantle was to be placed on his successors.

Washermans' caste at work.

Progress has been made. Yet, while caste has been legally abolished it persists in practice and attitude in many parts of India.

On the other hand the members of the first three castes are the "twice born." They wear the sacred thread, which indicates that they have gone through a special initiation ceremony. One is born into a caste. He inherits his position, and there is no possibility under orthodox Hindu teaching that he can be transferred.

But to understand caste one must also recall that Hinduism accepts a philosophy of both rebirth and religious works. Every living being in whatever form, man, animal, or insect, is presumed to face rebirth into either a higher or lower form. The human aim therefore, during life, is to fulfill faithfully the duties of one's own caste, to improve oneself by the attainment of knowledge, religious zeal, pilgrimages to holy places, the practice of meditation, or asceticism.

In spite of all of its weaknesses the caste system had some commendable aspects. In past generations it was probably the most potent cohesive force in Indian society. Although it was considered to be a divine ordering of human societies, there was a con-

siderable degree of flexibility within its limits. In its structures it permitted many variations of customs, belief, and practice. Castes sometimes combined their forces to secure a higher place in the social order. In any caste, one was assured an occupation in the economic scheme.

John Webster Grant, of the United Church of Canada, who recently returned from an assignment as visiting professor in the United Theological College of South India and Ceylon, makes this discerning comment on caste:

> In the West caste is commonly misunderstood and undervalued. First hand contact inspires considerable respect for the values inherent in caste. The caste serves in many ways as a brotherhood, exercising moral discipline among its members and providing economic support for those in need. It offers the security that goes with a sense of belonging. . . . Exclusion from his caste is the worst disaster that can befall an Indian, for it robs him not only of his material security but also of the moral sanctions that mould him into accepted patterns of social living. The sudden disintegration of the caste system would probably result in moral chaos, for the Indian is not accustomed to making decisions as a self-contained individual.[5]

The system of caste, which may have been reasonably adequate for India's historic place in the world, is totally unequipped to meet the new problems of technology and industrialism. The old order of caste is collapsing under the impact of many new forces. The breakup of these frozen rivers of society offers a challenge to Christians who glimpse the place the New India could assume in the life of the world.

The Five-Year Plans

Still another problem that concerned Gandhi was the extreme poverty of the Indian masses. There are great contrasts in Indian economic life. Dire poverty exists beside fantastic wealth. India has had within its borders rich princes with retinues of personal retainers. On the other hand, the vast majority of her people live in wretchedness and misery. India is a "nation of villages." Four-

[5] John Webster Grant, *God's People in India.* Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1959, pp. 9-10. Used by permission.

fifths of the population live in some half million rural clusters of small, sun-dried mud huts. The other one-fifth is dangerously crowded into the great cities.

To lift the level of these poverty-stricken masses, the Indian government has already carried through two Five-Year Development programs. India is now embarked on the Third Five-Year Plan. Large new areas were opened to cultivation by the development of irrigation projects under the First Five-Year Plan (1951-1956). The industrial output in the main industries of steel, textiles, jute, and cement rose by 43 per cent. In the Second Five-Year Plan (1956-1961) an emphasis was placed on food production with a goal of 25 per cent increase. Both five-year plans emphasized the community development. Under the plans the government trained thousands of workers to be "servants of the people." They taught village hygiene, organized schools, and promoted village handicrafts. They demonstrated the superiority of the steel bladed plows over the old wooden ones and the absolute necessity of fertilizers. They taught group recreation and encouraged the purchase of a radio to be located at the village community center.

It must be said that India's achievements during the first two five-year plans have been impressive, but the urgency for further accomplishment is well illustrated by the statistics in a recent Ford Foundation report:

1. The average income per person advanced 16 per cent during the decade, but is still *only 70 dollars per year.*
2. Life expectancy advanced by one-third but is still *only 42 years.*
3. The literacy rate increased by one-half but is still *only 24 per cent.*
4. Production of food grains rose 46 per cent but the average diet is *still one-third deficient* in normal requirements.
5. School enrollment nearly doubled but 39 per cent of the children from six to eleven and 77 per cent of those from eleven to fourteen still do not attend.[6]

[6] Ford Foundation Report, *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Barbara Ward Jackson, in *Foreign Affairs,* gives a vivid description of the transformation within a decade. She says,

> But perhaps the best evidence of the lively expansion is simply visual. A decade ago, a drive from Delhi to Umbala along the Grand Trunk Road was still a drive out of the pages of Kipling. The bullock carts moved slowly through the dust, camels padded silently by, and at dusk a blue haze of pungent smoke hung over the villages, and sent the aromatic smell of burning cow dung across the quiet, empty highway. . . . Today, the trucks and trailers hurtle by day and night. Bicycles in swarms show that the first of the consumer durables have reached the Indian village. . . . The Indian roads today are the roads of a society in the first forward thrust of modernization, where the bullocks still hold up the mammoth trucks, carrying nuts and screws and bicycle parts and machine tools from the busy little workshops of the Punjab to Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay.[7]

The goals of the Third Five-Year Plan are to achieve self-sufficiency in food grains, to expand manufacturing so that in another ten years the industrial development can be met largely by India's own resources, to keep employment at the highest possible level, to extend machine-building capacities, and to minimize inequalities of wealth and income.

The success or failure of India's Third Five-Year Plan may rest to a large degree on her ability to obtain foreign exchange. This she must have to purchase the bulldozers, cranes, shovels, heavy machinery, and tools for making machinery, which are necessary for further progress. It is to India that some of America's foreign aid has been extended. The dividends thus far have been better than many anticipated.

Illiteracy a Handicap

It is estimated that approximately four out of five Indians over ten years of age can neither read nor write. Illiteracy is a blight of which missionaries have long been acutely aware and of which the Indian government is taking increased cognizance. It is no secret that illiteracy and hunger go hand in hand. When men and women cannot read government decrees, when they must de-

[7] Barbara Ward Jackson, "India on the Eve of Its Third Plan," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 39, No. 2, January, 1961, p. 260. Used by permission.

pend on others to explain the secrets of the universe or the effective use of farm machinery, or when they do not have personal access to the great store of riches in the Bible and the world's literature, they are under tremendous handicaps.

There are probably four fundamental reasons for this acute problem. The first of these, which has already been suggested, is the complexity and variation of languages and dialects. The second is the extreme poverty which has demanded that young people become producing units of society at the earliest possible age. The third is the tradition of early marriage and the seclusion of young girls in the home. The fourth is that the educational

Girl reading the Bible. Notice nose ring.

pattern which was developed by British colonial officials to meet the particular needs of a competent civil service corps does not prepare adequately for the requirements of a young democracy. Under British rule fewer than five per cent of the young people ever reached secondary school. This was far from being a system of universal education. Those who went to secondary school were mainly from the upper classes of society. Consequently the Indian Government is now making unusual efforts in the various five-year plans for the expansion of Indian education on the primary and secondary level. To the solution of this difficult problem Christian missions have contributed through the development of modern educational patterns, literature translation, literacy campaigns, and special ministries to the beyond-school ages. An example is the "Each One Teach One" literacy campaign sponsored by the National Christian Council of India.

Tiger at the Door

Indian problems are not all centered in language, caste, illiteracy, poverty, or a population explosion. Some problems have political overtones that hang like heavy, dark clouds on the horizon. India has a common border with Communist China of approximately fifteen hundred miles.[8] Her strategic position in the ideological struggle between Russia, China, and the United States helps to explain many of her political positions in the United Nations and in world affairs. India generally regards herself as a neutral. There are good and sufficient explanations for this attitude. To her northern border lies the great communistic country of China with a population of an estimated six hundred million people[9] and with millions of troops ready to move under an autocratic military leadership. China made repeated military moves on an ill-defined border. India sought for a long time to minimize these border clashes, evidently in the hope of appeasing the so-called "Tiger at India's Door." [10]

[8] See "Tiger at India's Door?" *Senior Scholastic,* (Teacher Edition), Dec. 9, 1959.
[9] U.N. estimate, 1958.
[10] "Tiger at India's Door?" *Supra.*

The most serious trouble began in 1950 with the establishment of Chinese rule over Tibet. Since then China has moved slowly but relentlessly. Many of the earlier border crossings were seemingly probes to determine Indian reactions and to test her defenses. Maps in use in China began to show some of the territories in Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and North India as Chinese. Someone called the India-China border problems a "cartographic war"[11] or a "map" war. China is known to have an army of 2,500,000 well-equipped soldiers compared with India's well-trained but modestly equipped army of four hundred thousand men. The difference of opinion between India and China seems to center on a delineation of the MacMahon Line, drawn up in a convention in 1914 at Simla in the Punjab, North India. It was an attempt to draw a boundary satisfactory to all participants—China, Tibet, and Great Britain. Sir Arthur Henry MacMahon was then the British Secretary to the Government of India and this boundary takes its name from him. *U.S. News and World Report* estimated that about forty thousand square miles of present India territory was claimed by China in late 1959.[12] Some feel that China is also expressing a resentment for the refuge India afforded the Dalai Lama of Tibet.

Late in 1962 Communist China prepared for all-out war along the border and issued an ultimatum on the territory she claimed. India was continuing to pursue a neutralist policy and was seemingly caught unaware of the serious proportions of the emerging conflict. The Communists moved quickly and Indian resistance at key points crumbled under the heavy mechanized Chinese attack. World opinion evidenced serious concern that a major conflict was brewing. China rapidly established her hegemony over the principal areas she had claimed, then called a unilateral truce. The Indian government never fully concurred but agreed to study the terms. China's strong, aggressive moves, followed by a call for truce, seem to onlookers to be confused and obscure, but this

[11] Vera Micheles Dean, "Red China on the March," *Foreign Policy Bulletin,* Jan. 15, 1960.

[12] *U.S. News and World Report,* Oct. 19, 1959, p. 92.

manner of action is undoubtedly completely understood by China. During the uneasy calm that has ensued, both sides seem to be building up military equipment. The situation remains potentially dangerous.

Communist Influence Increases

Reaching even inside the boundaries, however, has been the infiltration of Communist philosophy into the fabric of India's social and political life. The poverty-ridden people of the city slums and the famine-stricken agricultural areas of India have been ripe for the promises from Peiping and Moscow. Communism first received attention in India toward the end of the 1920's, in the crowded industrial areas. Then, from 1929 until World War II the British Government clamped down on activities of the Communists. For a decade or more the party was illegal and largely underground. As the Second World War was breaking, the Communists began to increase their influence in some of the left-wing and popular front organizations, many of which were rallying around the cry for independence for India.

In 1951 the policy of the Communist Party in India began to come under the influence of Chinese Communism. The emphasis was first placed on land reform in the agrarian areas and then on the support of small industries as over against the wealthy capitalists and foreign-controlled capital. During the last decade in the drought-blighted and poverty-stricken sections of India the Communists have advocated such objectives as the redistribution of land without payment, long-term cheap credit for peasants, cancellation of debts, the elimination of caste, and the formation of cooperative organizations to lift agricultural living conditions. The promises of Moscow and Peiping appear rosy in these areas of much-needed reform. The Communist goals embody changes which are long overdue and would be legitimate, were it not for the authoritarian and utterly ruthless methods by which it is proposed to introduce and implement them. The Communist political organization in India grew strong and was closely allied to its Chinese counterpart. The party finally came into power in

1957 in the State of Kerala. In August, 1959, the Central Indian Government took steps to outlaw it. Thus, two years of chaotic rule were ended as the Communist leaders were removed from office on order from New Delhi. Yet, Communism continues to make a strong appeal based on a program which is purportedly close to the needs of the people.

Pakistan Gains Independence

Another area of political difficulty for India has been its relationships with Pakistan. The evolution of this independent state, once a part of British India, had its origins in the religious conflicts between the Muslims and the Hindus. The name Pakistan is coined from the Persian language, and means "spiritual land" or "religious land." The term was first used in 1933 to dramatize the idea of a religious state made up of Muslims. This plea for a separate state was an issue during all the later years of Gandhi's life as he struggled for Indian independence. He tried desperately, but unsuccessfully, to keep India united religiously as well as politically.

Hindus outnumbered Muslims approximately three to one in the pre-independent India. Hence, the Muslims were fearful that they would be reduced to a futile minority. Consequently, the Muslim League, led by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's national hero and the principal architect of the Republic of Pakistan, voiced the desire for independent status. This attitude greatly troubled the Indian National Congress and its leader, Gandhi, and the Mahatma went to great lengths to try to preserve the unity of India. Finally, however, when the whole issue of independence from Great Britain was at a focal point, the only solution seemed to be the formation of two independent states. Consequently, Pakistan was separated from India and became the Republic of Pakistan, with a population of 93 million people. It is now a federation of two provinces, East and West Pakistan, separated by a land distance of 920 miles, or a twenty-six-hundred-mile sea journey around the peninsula. West Pakistan is by far the larger division, embracing more than 310,000 square miles. Rawalpindi,

the interim capital, is located here. Much of the land in West Pakistan is dry and unproductive. Although the area of East Pakistan is only approximately one-fifth as much as that of West Pakistan, two-thirds of the entire population of Pakistan lives there in contrast to the one-third in the much larger territory of West Pakistan. Neither East nor West Pakistan acquired great commercial or industrial centers, and neither has large mineral wealth. They have almost no fuel and both are largely agricultural.

Kashmir, Bone of Contention

This background of the separation of India and Pakistan is given because of both the historical relationships to India and the current problems which affect Indian life. A pertinent illustration of these issues is the status of the beautiful northern state of Kashmir, which has been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan ever since the independence agreements of 1947. At that time Kashmir was free to join either India or Pakistan. Her rulers were uncertain and hesitated to make a decision. At length, the Hindu ruler of Kashmir elected to join India rather than the Muslim State of Pakistan. Kashmir's remote and mountainous terrain promptly became the battleground for an undeclared war. Tribesmen from Pakistan invaded it and India moved troops into it. Finally, in 1949, the United Nations obtained a cease-fire agreement on the basis of a U. N. committee report that provided for the demilitarization of the whole area and also a plebiscite to be held later.

Years have now gone by without the holding of the official plebiscite and India contends that, since three elections have been held, the conditions for the plebiscite have been met. At the present time, India controls about two-thirds of Kashmir and Pakistan holds the rest. Russia has supported India in maintaining the *status quo.* The President of the United States has proffered the good offices of this country as a mediator but this offer has not been accepted.[13] The problem is one which easily inflames the nationalistic and religious sentiments in both countries.

[13] See *New York Times,* June 16, 1962.

Water, a Source of Life

At the moment, new problems confront India in her Pakistan relationships. Kashmir's snow-clad mountains and many springs in the numerous deep valleys are the sources of life-giving rivers, the main ones of which run into Pakistan. Water rights are more precious than gold to both India and Pakistan, and their control may mean eventual survival for either or both countries. Moreover, Kashmir's principal rail link is with Pakistan. To add to the problem, the Hindus and Sikhs, who predominate in the province of Jammu, Kashmir, now urge that this province be separated from the rest of the disputed area. Thus, serious problems arise from the critical water shortages and to some degree from the animosities between Hindus and Muslims that have existed for centuries, and this Switzerland of India continues to provide a potential source of conflict. By negotiation, an agreement has been reached which gives some hope for an ultimate solution of the water problem. But until some more permanent disposition of the ultimate political status of Kashmir is made, this mountainous hinterland will continue to be a powder keg in India-Pakistan relationships.

Differences Between Hindus and Muslims

For a further understanding of present-day India, it should be realized that Hindus and Muslims have little in common. Some of the primary differences between them have occasioned strong and often violent antagonisms. The Muslims believe in one God, Allah, and his prophet Mohammed. The Hindus have many deities. The Muslims are unified by strong clan and family ties. Hindu social structure is broken down into an intricate system of caste divisions. Muslims regard the pig as unclean. Hindus regard the cow as sacred and an object of veneration and worship, and therefore will not eat beef. Muslims have mosques, but the center of their worship is Mecca, in Arabia, in whose direction they turn for prayer each day. Hindus have many temples dedicated to their numerous deities. Until more recent times, and still continuing in the more isolated parts of the Muslim world, Muslim women

are kept in seclusion in the zenana, wearing the veil or purdah in public. For the Muslims, the Koran incorporates the sacred writings of Mohammed, the prophet. The most sacred scripture of the Hindus is the Veda, comprising more than a hundred extant books.

As is evidenced by the formation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the majority of Muslims were located in the northern and eastern parts of India. They are descendants of invaders from Arabia and Afghanistan, who entered the great passes through the north of India.

The partitioning of India into India and Pakistan was followed by bloody, troublesome times. In both countries there were riots and bloodshed. Whole villages were wiped out. In nine weeks one hundred thousand Hindus and Muslims lost their lives. Over five million people changed their location. Two million, seven hundred and fifty thousand Muslims were trekking to Pakistan, while 2,700,000 Hindus were moving in the opposite direction, each group using the same bullock roads and footpaths. The trains of immigrants often raided each other. If death by injury, illness, or starvation overtook the old or young, they were left behind. The shrill cry of the vultures and the whine of fighting dogs along the trail told their own story. Everywhere were misery, frustration, and fear. Cholera, dysentery, and typhoid were companions of the journey. Most of those who were migrating had left their homes and their possessions behind.

A decade and a half has now gone by. Some of these refugees have been integrated into the society of their choice. Others are still homeless. The governments of India and Pakistan have been rendering such aid as they can. From 1947 to 1958 the government of India spent two hundred million dollars to alleviate suffering and to settle new arrivals.[14] The churches of America, seeing the need, joined in a program of relief, rehabilitation, resettlement, and training. The Refugee Welfare Committee of the National Council of India and Bengal was organized. A co-

[14] Dana M. Albaugh, *Who Shall Separate Us?* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1962, p. 101.

operative church project to raise one million dollars in the United States over a five-year period was reported in the *New York Times* on February 5, 1960. The purpose is "to improve the welfare of the more than 3,000,000 Hindu refugees in West Bengal and Calcutta." The project first called *Doya,* or Mercy, is now known as the Bengal Relief Service.

It is still a common sight to see refugee families in India living in temporary hovels. Whole families pick up their possessions by day and return at night, spreading their thin, dirty, and inadequate garments on the floors of railway stations and platforms and in the doorways of public buildings. At one time in the early 1950's an average resident population of nearly ten thousand refugees could be found in the Sealdah railroad station in Calcutta. As late as 1960 it was estimated that some five thousand men, women, and little children were still making their homes, if they could be called that, on the platforms and in the waiting rooms of stations. Thus, fifteen years after independence, these refugees remain as a tragic illustration of some of the problems created by the partition of India. However, the terrors have subsided, allowing the relationships between Pakistan and India to stabilize to some degree, and there have been indications that it may be possible to work out some of the remaining problems by peaceful negotiation.

It must remembered that the formation of Pakistan and the two-way exodus of so many peoples have not solved the Hindu-Muslim difficulties. There still remain in India proper more than forty million Muslims, approximately one-tenth of the total population. This is the same relative proportion as the Negro is to the total population of the United States.

Gandhi's Mantle Falls on Nehru

Gandhi's mantle of leadership through all the tremendous adjustments and events since independence has fallen on one of his younger trusted contemporaries, Jawaharlal Nehru, elected Prime Minister in 1947. Like Gandhi's, his background was a distinguished one, for he was the son of a Brahman political leader in Kashmir. He was educated at Cambridge University in England

and studied law in London. He, like Gandhi, was an advocate of complete independence for India. He was committed to a welfare state with radical, but peaceful, social and economic reforms. He was an admirer of Gandhi but did not endorse his religious asceticism. Like Gandhi, he was imprisoned for his part in the independence movement, particularly for his support of the "Quit India" demand against the British in 1942. In contrast with Gandhi's viewpoint, he has been a strong advocate of modern scientific methods and technological advances. He has been a neutralist in international affairs except for the Goa incident in December, 1961, and his uncompromising stand on Kashmir, two positions which he feels are justified by history. His neutralist stands have often provoked criticism in the United States and in the United Nations. This he discounts by pointing out that neither India's industrial program nor her geographical position would permit her to take a strong stand in the power struggle between East and West. It has been suggested that Nehru feels that a neutral course is justified "to gain precious time for the painful task of inclining the nation toward democracy and prosperity."[15]

Most Americans have seen Mr. Nehru on television. His Gandhi cap, his long, light coat, and his tight leggings are familiar in all the major capitals of the world. He is over 70 years old. With his reserved demeanor and his quiet voice he carries a message to the world from India's millions who regard him with almost the same affection and degree of worship as afforded to Gandhi himself. He has provided the image of a new India to the millions struggling against language barriers, caste divisions, internal religious dissension, and external pressure on the national boundaries. He echoes the cries of the millions who are attempting to pull themselves up by their bootstraps to an elevation where the winds of freedom blow strong and fresh.

Christians Assess Their Task

It is not hard to see how these revolutionary developments in the life of India affect the whole impact of the Christian move-

[15] Joe David Brown, "India," *Life World Library*. New York: Time, Inc., 1961.

ment. The intense nationalism, the neutralist position in foreign affairs, the conflicts of dominant religions, the disintegration of the caste system, the goals of the Five-Year Programs and the forces outside India, all must be studied as Christians assess their task.

It has been pointed out by Dr. Grant that wherever missionaries have gone in the world they have a common problem. He says:

> Whenever the gospel is introduced to a new culture it comes as a foreign import, with foreign ways of worship. . . . Coming with alien associations the gospel may lose something of its inwardness in transmission or it may be infected by the sub-Christian ideas and practices that are native to the soil.[16]

Christians in India have faced and still face these difficulties.

Now that we have glanced at some of the problems of which Christians find themselves a part in modern India, let us turn to the historical setting from which the present-day American Baptist program has emerged. Christianity has indeed been a "foreign" import, but not a recent one. Let us see how well it has taken root in Indian soil and what problems remain to hinder the Message from achieving that indigenous character which will enable it to flourish in the hearts of the people.

[16] John Webster Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 1. Used by permission.

Hindu funeral pyre on Ganges River.

2

How India Got Her Religions

The subcontinent of India was known to the ancients. In the days of King Solomon reference is made to the many articles of commerce which most certainly had their origin in India. The book of Esther mentions India (Esther 1:1). The early records of India were compiled by poets who, no doubt, drew heavily on their imaginations for some of the details. Time was computed by astrologers, who made the successive ages of the world correspond with the conjunction of the more important heavenly bodies. The first precise date in Indian history was fixed by the Greeks, who, under Alexander the Great, occupied northwestern India in 326 B.C. after defeating Darius the Persian. Yet it is well established that prior to 1500 B.C. there were repeated crests of migration of mixed races into India from Persia, Central Asia, Tartary (west border of China), Turkestan, and Tibet. Some of the invaders were Scythian and Mongolian.

Of these various peoples who came into control of India, there are three which seem more important in relation to her religions than the many other transitory undulations and shifts in rule—the Aryan, the Mogul, and the English. They are outstanding because each left contributions and problems of a permanent nature in the life of India.

The Aryan Invasion—Hinduism Introduced

When the Aryans, a strong, virile people from Central Asia, came to India about 1500 B.C., they brought with them different racial backgrounds and culture. They settled in the neighborhood of the River Sindhu, now known as the Indus. The name was

gradually modified and the invaders of the Indus Valley came to be called Hindus; likewise their country became known as Hindustan (or Hindoostan, as in some of the older atlases).

Before establishing their control, the Aryans drove back the inhabitants, a darker-skinned people probably belonging to the Dravidian race, and pushed them farther and farther toward the south. The Dravidian classification is now applied to such people of India as the Telugus and the Tamils. They are believed to be descendants of the ancient Scythians, a nomadic and warlike people who once roamed from Rumania across what is now West Turkestan in southeastern Russia.

Because of these invasions the Aryan strain began to appear in some people of central and northern India many centuries before the time of Christ. The name *Aryan* is more properly applied to a language group than to a single people. This word seems to come from two words, "noble" and "household." The Aryans spoke languages commonly referred to as Indo-European, Indo-Germanic, or Indo-Iranian. The language reached a high degree of development, and it is believed that Sanskrit, the classical language of India and the root of many Indian dialects, had its origin in these ancient backgrounds. Generally speaking the Aryan invaders were of taller build, lighter complexion, hair, and eyes, and had higher foreheads than the smaller, slighter, darker people of Dravidian backgrounds.

Hinduism, a Way of Life

Presumably it was the Aryans, representing several tribal backgrounds, that brought the system of caste into the life of India. The Code of Manu, the basic Hindu law, is believed to have been introduced by these invaders. It codifies the established practices of Hinduism in regard to rules of caste, diet and customs, funeral rites, laws of government, and religious theories such as transmigration and reincarnation of the soul, an essential element in the caste system. Transmigration is the belief that the soul after death passes into either higher or lower forms of life. Therefore the goal of life is to attain a purity in each stage of living which will ulti-

mately return the human soul to God. Many of the Indian people feel that by penance and purification they can lift their level to a higher form of life in the next birth.

Throughout its course Hinduism has been an eclectic religion, adopting or adapting sources of strength from other faiths, or accommodating itself to the degree of mental and spiritual stature of its followers. Gandhi was a staunch Hindu, but at the same time he found deep spiritual enrichment in the Sermon on the Mount and other New Testament teachings. So long as a Hindu conforms to the regulations and rules of his caste, he may believe in a single god or in many gods in any way he pleases. There is no common theology or doctrine of faith, and there is no congregational worship. Temples are usually small, and the local priest alone performs the rites on behalf of the villagers. As he enters the temple, he rings a bell to awaken the deity or call attention to the food or flowers and the prayers he has come to offer. There have been many reform movements in Hinduism, such as the Sikh branch, which attempts to unite all men in one faith, particularly Hindus and Muslims.

There seem to be a few essentials of Hinduism which are universally accepted. Two primary ones are respect for the Vedas as sacred literature and the principle of Karma, which warns that nothing a person does goes unrewarded. This latter concept is symbolized in the wheel of Asoka, the central symbol in India's flag. The wheel denotes the law. The turning of the wheel represents the measuring out of justice which ultimately comes around to each person according to his deeds, good or evil. Hinduism provides for a religious experience that is voluntary, personal, and optional.[1] Transmigration and reincarnation are universally accepted. Belief in caste as a social framework provides the structure upon which Hinduism rests, even though it is now disintegrating under external pressures. Respect for meditation, pilgrimages, sacrifices, and holy men continues as a distinctive.[2]

[1] Shailer Mathews and G. B. Smith, eds., *A Dictionary of Religion and Ethics.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921.

[2] Vergilius Ture Anselm Ferm, ed., *An Encyclopedia of Religion.* New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1945.

Photo by M. D. Farnum

Mogul tomb at Agra.

Photo by M. D. Farnum

Mogul ruins near Secunderabad.

All this is important, for while American Baptists in India have had some work among Muslims, their greatest emphases have been among the Hindus of the great river valleys and the plains, the outcaste Hindus in South India, and the rural animists of Assam and the more remote villages of Bengal and Orissa.

The second invasion which should be mentioned is that of Darius, King of Persia from 522 to 486 B.C., who extended his conquests from Greece to India. The wealth of India was already known because the Egyptian caravans of camels, "the ships of the sands," passed through Persia, bearing spices and jewels from India in the East. It is said that India paid tribute to Darius in gold, while many of the neighboring countries could pay only in silver.[3] The Persians added a large area of northwest India to their empire and ruled for a century and a half. With them came their religion, Zoroastrianism, supposed to have been the religion of the Wise Men (see Matt. 2:1). The Parsis of India, a significant minority group of high character and culture, are their descendants. They are among the leading industrialists of India, probably the best known being the Tata family, founders of the Tata steel mills, the largest in Asia, in Jamshedpur, Bihar. Their business acumen is outstanding.

The Greek invasion can be dealt with briefly, because it did not leave many permanent results. Alexander the Great, with an army of 120,000, crossed the Indus River in 331 B.C. and subjugated all northern India. Alexander did not establish a permanent government. His conquest was followed by a struggle for power among the local rival leaders.

[3] John Clark Marshman, *The History of India.* London: Harrison and Son, 1859, p. 11.

Buddhism Spreads Through Asia

It was about the time of the Persian invasion that an event of major importance in religious history was taking place. Buddhism was becoming a missionary religion. A reformer of Hinduism, Gautama Buddha, reckoned as the seventh Buddha, was extending his influence. He rejected the Brahman system of Hindu gods and goddesses and did not believe in the elaborate priesthood system of the Brahmans. He repudiated the doctrine of caste.

Asoka, a man who was reputed to be a Sythian possessing unusual religious zeal and administrative ability, reigned as emperor over all of North India from 274 to 232 B.C., a period often called "The Golden Age of India." This explains why his symbol appears in India's flag. At the beginning of this reign Buddhism was only a minor religious sect. But Emperor Asoka himself embraced Buddhism and gave his full backing to the zealous missionary efforts. As large territorial annexations were made, Buddhism was introduced to the people. He brought the provinces of Bengal and Orissa under his rule and forced the subjects to become converts to Buddhism. Just before the opening of the Christian era, the new religion of Buddhism was spreading out toward Burma and Ceylon. About the year 65 B.C. Buddhism was carried into Tibet and China. Later it was to spread from China to Japan where, with Shinto, it became one of the most influential and widespread religions to challenge the entrance of Christianity.

The spread of Buddhism is important in understanding the first overseas work undertaken by American Baptist missionaries. When Adoniram and Ann Hasseltine Judson, the American Baptist pioneers, were forced out of India proper and arrived in Burma, they found, not Hinduism, but Buddhism the chief religion among the Burmans. Burma, predominately a Buddhist country, was administered by the British as a province of India prior to her separation from India and her independence.

The Mogul Invasion and Islam

Probably the most powerful dynasty set up by any invaders of India was that of the Moguls, a stalwart people of Mongolian

descent. They left a profound impression on every aspect of Indian life. North India, particularly, carries many marks of the dominance of these often-warlike but talented rulers. The Mogul Empire began about A.D. 1526, when Baber, a descendant of the mighty Genghis Khan, won a sweeping victory on the plains of India. Some 30 years later, the Emperor Akbar came into power. By the time of his death in 1605, his rule had been extended to sixteen Indian provinces. These Mogul rulers were of the Muslim faith, and they brought with them the Koran and an undying allegiance to Allah, the one God, and Mohammed, his prophet. Their faith was imposed upon the conquered. In contrast with Hinduism, Islam has only one God, Allah. Although the Hindus have their festivals in worship of idols with much music and high celebration, the Muslims gather in great assemblies for prayer. Jesus is included in the roster of the prophets of Islam, but they believe that Mohammed superseded him. Much of the rootage of Islam is related to Judaism.

In this Muslim conquest can be seen the beginnings of some of the current frictions between the Muslims and Hindus in India, the two great faiths within her borders. One of the most notable successors of the ruler Akbar was Shah Jahan, who had a passion for building. It was he who brought much beauty into Indian architecture. The famous Taj Mahal was built at Agra during his reign as a mausoleum in memory of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahall. Even today it is considered to be one of the world's most remarkable and beautiful buildings. A French historian, Tavernier, who saw the Taj Mahal being built, said that it took 20,000 men 22 years to complete it. Shah Jahan also built many other public buildings. His reign encouraged a lively period of literary activity and arts production.

The East India Company Gets a Foothold

The religious intolerance of the Mogul emperors engendered bitterness and resistance among the Hindu population and became an indirect cause of the ultimate downfall of their powerful dynasty. The way was paved for an invasion of a different type.

With the decline of the power of the Mogul rulers, there was another political and commercial development of profound importance for India. On December 31, 1600, a small group of private English traders, inspired by the success of the Portuguese and Dutch in the East India trade, was granted a charter by Queen Elizabeth for trade with the East Indies. With an insignificant start and a capital fund of only £72,000, this company grew into a mercantile colossus. It dominated the scene in India for two and a half centuries, affecting both commercial and religious developments.

The story of the British ascendance in India is available in any good encyclopedia. It is the story of the growing private enterprise, the East India Company, closely associated with its sponsoring government. It is the story of the building of a great commercial empire which was interested primarily in profits for the owners. The Company frequently operated outside the bounds of any adequate government control which would have conserved the interests of the total population of India. It is the story of the training of a capable group of Indian civil servants. It is also the story of the gradual assumption of the administration of India by the British Crown. Many of Britain's greatest leaders had their early experiences and training in the colonial government in India.

The British Crown Assumes Power

During its life the East India Company underwent increasing regulation from England, until the Sepoy Mutiny in 1856. The apparent, but superficial, reason given for this serious revolt by the Indians was the introduction of the new English rifle. The cartridges had to be bitten off and greased with a mixture of pig and cow fat. This the Sepoys, both Muslim and Hindu, rebelled against: the Muslims because they considered the pig to be an unclean animal; the Hindus because in their religious belief the cow was sacred. The rebellion was only the reflection, however, of deeper dissatisfaction and was the outcome of many untoward events which led to the ultimate assumption of power by the British Crown a couple of years later. World opinion was also clamor-

ing for a change in the interest of the welfare of the people of India.

The occasion when the British Crown assumed power prompted a royal proclamation with an expression of deep personal concern for the welfare of the Indian people. In 1858 Queen Victoria's proclamation was read, ending forever the control by the East India Company which had begun more than 250 years before. On the plains between the old capital at Calcutta and the new one at Delhi, Lord Channing read these memorable words in India's long struggle for freedom:

> When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquility shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer the government for the benefit of all our subjects therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward.[4]

Britain Leaves India a Legacy

Noted already are some of the weaknesses and limitations which prevailed under the East India Company and the subsequent British administration. Modern Indian leaders including Gandhi and Nehru were to rise in the first half of the twentieth century to challenge the past. But before leaving this phase of India's history it may be well also to assess some of Britain's enduring contributions. When British administration was peacefully relinquished, a legacy built up during the colonial administration was left to India. On this strong foundation she is now establishing her independent course.

The British administration gave India almost a century of relative peace from the various political and religious rivalries. It built thousands of miles of good roads and railroads. It instituted public health and sanitary measures that curbed the many epidemics. It controlled famines and built public works. It gave India the foundation of a school system from elementary grades to university level and a common language, English. It provided a

[4] Joseph C. Robbins, *Following the Pioneers.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1922, p. 9.

system of jurisprudence and courts which India has preserved in her independence and which gives India a place of distinction in the fair administration of justice. And in all of this it must be noticed that church organizations and religiously inclined political leaders have had an influential voice.

Christianity Comes to India

Just as Gandhi's mantle was transferred to Nehru later, so was the mantle of Christian service passed from one Christian leader to another during India's earliest recorded history. India first came to the attention of the Christian world soon after the death and resurrection of our Savior. Some think that in India there was a colony of Jews which might have been represented at Pentecost in Jerusalem.

Although there seems to be good reason to believe that Christianity was taken to India in the first century, A.D., Pantaenus is the earliest missionary name on record. This man was probably in India from A.D. 180 to 190. He was a stoic philosopher and scholar who subsequently became a Christian. Later he was made head of the famous Christian College in Alexandria, Egypt. Two of his pupils, Clement and Origen, were among the greatest of the early Christian historians, teachers, and writers. Clement says that Pantaenus was "a man of learning who had penetrated most profoundly into the spirit of the Scripture." [5] Jerome, the father of biblical scholarship, says, "Pantaenus was sent to India that he might preach Christ among the Brahmins."[6] Pantaenus apparently found Christianity already in India for he brought back to Alexandria an early edition of the Gospel of Matthew. There is no present knowledge as to the extent of the work of the earliest missionaries in India or the reception they received. Barnes has said that at the Council of Nicaea called in A.D. 325 by Emperor Constantine there was present a "Bishop of India." It is possible that he was the bishop of Persia, now called Iran. India was ap-

[5] Lemuel Call Barnes, *Two Thousand Years of Missions Before Carey.* Chicago: Christian Culture Press, 1900, p. 89.

[6] *Ibid.*

parently within the jurisdiction of the emperor of Persia in that day.

Early Christian Movements

Before the age of modern missions began with William Carey the shoemaker, the plantings of Christianity in India seem to fall into five more or less distinct periods. These are, respectively, (1) the early Christian; (2) the Nestorian; (3) the Roman Catholic; (4) the Dutch Presbyterian and (5) the Danish Lutheran. The first advance of Christianity by the church is represented by early pioneers such as Pantaenus. The second planting shows the influence of the Nestorians. Early in the fifth century the Archbishop of Constantinople, Nestorius, is said to have objected strenuously to the church's new practice of calling Mary of Nazareth the "Mother of God," and to certain metaphysical speculations on the nature of Christ. An ecclesiastical council was called at Ephesus to settle the dispute. Travel was slow and arduous in those days and before all the delegates representing the Nestorian point of view could arrive the meeting was called to order, on June 22, A.D. 431, by Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, a bitter foe of Nestorius. Cyril's forces easily overwhelmed Nestorius and his decimated delegation, and in a single day the issue was decided. Nestorius and his followers were driven into exile.

Out of this unfortunate church quarrel the followers of Nestorius were scattered abroad under severe persecution, and they went all over the known world preaching. At Nisibis in Persia, the Nestorians established one of the greatest missionary training schools the continent of Asia has ever had. From this Christian center of learning and education two main streams of Christianity went flowing across Asia. One of these went eastward to Mongolia and China. The other, important for our study, moved southeastward into India.

In their movement across Persia toward India the Nestorians combined with a large body of Christians who had been planted there long before. Their exact identity has been lost in the dimness of history. It is known only that the Christians in Asia in the

fourth and fifth centuries were willing to suffer martyrdom for their faith. Over a period of 35 years in the fourth century the names of more than 16,000 monks, nuns, and clergy are officially recorded in old manuscripts as having been put to death. Many thousands more, of humble Christians whose names were not entered on the rolls of martyrs by religious orders, undoubtedly met a similar fate. But in spite of it all, under God's hand, the church survived and even multiplied and spread abroad.

The local Hindu history of the Malabar Coast on the western side of India south of Bombay and Goa relates how two bishops from Syria were extremely well received by local authorities and given permission to build a church. The tradition of the Malabar Christians, often called "the St. Thomas Churches," holds firmly to the belief that the Apostle Thomas was the first missionary in their midst. This devout leader was in all probability a later Thomas, perhaps one of the Nestorians who was leading a band of that sect driven from the Greek Empire. According to Barnes, "The current names and customs of the people, their use of a form of the Syrian language, their well known later ecclesiastical relations and data leave no question that the main evangelizing agency was Nestorian."[7]

In this early missionary effort is a fascinating account from an Egyptian merchant named Cosmas. He later became a monk and gave a vivid report of his journeys under the title *Topographia Christiania.* It is a fascinating story of the early spread of Christianity. The following words were written by Cosmas not later than 547 A.D.:

> So that I can speak with confidence of the truth of what I say, relating what I myself have seen and heard in many places I have visited.

Cosmas reports a church with clergy and a congregation of believers on the island of Ceylon. Then he goes on to say,

> . . . though I know not if there be any Christians farther on in that direction, and such is also the case in the land called Male where the pepper grows. And in the place called Kalliani [Malabar], there is a bishop appointed from Persia. . . .[8]

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 90.
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 90.

A Sixth-Century Indian Church

When the Portuguese arrived in India nearly a thousand years later they found over a hundred villages composed entirely of Nestorian Christians. They also discovered more than fourteen hundred churches and some two hundred thousand members.[9] These churches used the Syrian language in their services. Their meeting houses were simple and they had no images. Their priests were permitted to marry. They were governed in spiritual and temporal things by an archbishop who had received his ordination in Syria. They reportedly paid some tribute to the local Hindu Maharajah.

Later Arrivals in India

In terms of missionary outreach and endeavor, the period from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries A.D. was a relatively dark one for India as well as the rest of the world. However, in the latter centuries of this period there were well authenticated reports of visits to India by Franciscan and Dominican monks who were Roman Catholic missionaries. About A.D. 1430 Jordanus, a Dominican, was sent to India as a missionary bishop. He wrote a book called *Wonders of the East,* in which he told of the opportunity for evangelism among the Indian people and reported the martyrdom suffered by some of his colleagues.

The Portuguese Arrive in India

In the making, toward the close of the fifteenth century, was an event of great importance to India and her place in the world. This event was to give an entirely new direction to Indian politics and commerce. On July 8, 1497, almost the entire population of Lisbon, Portugal, gathered at the harbor of that beautiful city to witness the departure of three vessels under the command of an intrepid seaman, Vasco da Gama. The spectators watched the sailors go through their religious rites as would men who never expected to return. The King of Portugal had been deeply cha-

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 91.

grined that it was Christopher Columbus under the patronage of the King of Spain who, hoping to reach India by sailing westward, had discovered America. Europe was still rocking from the news of this successful return from a voyage which had been believed to be fraught with unprecedented peril. An earlier Portuguese admiral under the sponsorship of John, King of Portugal, had already rounded the Cape of Good Hope, the southern tip of Africa. The admiral had called it the Cape of Storms because of the tempestuous weather he had encountered, but King John renamed it Cape of Good Hope in view of the prospects of pushing still farther to the East, to the riches of the Indies.

On May 22, 1498, only a year after leaving Lisbon, Vasco da Gama cast anchor on the Malabar Coast off Calicut. This city was south of the major Muslim conquests of earlier centuries and was ruled by an independent Hindu prince. After many vicissitudes the Portuguese explorers established a base of operations and a fortified garrison on Goa, an island about twenty-three miles in circumference and some 250 miles north of Calicut. This island on the Malabar Coast became the seat of Portuguese power in the East, and was only to be invaded by India almost five centuries later. For a century the Portuguese were to be the supreme guardians of India and the East Indies, even though they never obtained possession of a single province on the mainland. It was not until almost a hundred years later that the British, French, Dutch, and Danish trading corporations were to enter the international scramble for the wealth of India.

The Third Stage of Planting the Cross

The conquest of Goa on the coast of Malabar by the Portuguese brought Roman Catholicism into conflict with the Syrian Christian communities, which were already there. Unfortunately, these earliest Syrian Christian communities were to be intensively persecuted by the Portuguese clergy who traveled, as was customary, with the invading European forces. So instead of 1400 churches along the Malabar Coast at the time of Carey's arrival in India, it is reported that only 116 churches remained, eighty-four of which

were united to Rome and thirty-two were still independent.[10] This gallant group has recovered somewhat in numbers and influence. They are members of the World Council of Churches, as are many other historic groups. At the recent meeting of the Council in New Delhi they could be seen in their colorful garb and clerical vestments.

Francis Xavier, a Pioneer in India

Even though the early Syrian Christians were often persecuted by emissaries of the Roman Catholic church, there were many famous missionaries of that church who blazed a trail of service across India. Among these was the first and perhaps most famous Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier. He was one of the original members of the Company of Jesus, later to be known as Jesuits, which had been founded by Ignatius Loyola, a colleague. Loyola was an experienced soldier, and he disciplined his missionary band along the strictest military lines. His followers took a pledge of poverty, chastity, and obedience to fight as "true knights" for the extension of their faith to unbelievers.

One day in 1540 Francis Xavier received his orders to start on the very next day for a mission to India. Two years later, after a difficult and stormy voyage around Africa, he arrived in India. He began his work by ringing a large bell through the streets of Goa and calling upon the people to undertake Christian instruction. All of the southern part of India was to be traversed by this fervent evangelist. Later, he crossed into the Kingdom of Travancore.

Francis Xavier spent five months teaching and writing a catechism for the low caste, depressed people working the pearl fisheries in the Gulf of Mannar. His principal contribution was that he dramatized and gave renewed life and purpose to the mission outreach of the church. He lived with the people and ministered to their needs. It has been said that he was too restless and too much of a traveler to make a permanent contribution. But Xavier had a genuine zeal for the mission of the church. "He took through India, Malacca, Japan and to the gates of China the

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

first flaming torch of modern times to announce the Light of the World."[11] Francis Xavier was followed by many other talented and consecrated Roman Catholic missionaries. Today the Roman Catholic community in India numbers nearly 6 million, more than twenty-five hundred parishes and 10,500 churches.[12]

Dutch Missionaries

The fourth major planting in India was by the Dutch. The final results of their efforts were related only indirectly to India. Yet it was because of the desire of Justus Heurnius, son of a distinguished medical professor at the University of Leyden, that the Dutch Indies became such a stronghold for the Dutch Reformed churches and Presbyterianism. Young Heurnius took both medical and theological courses. He was eager to go to India as a missionary, but the Dutch East India Company, like the English Company, was generally suspicious of the admission of missionaries.

The British East India Company, however, was not entirely opposed to religious institutions. The company maintained paid chaplains whose primary responsibilities were to the British employees. For example, the Reverend David Brown not only was garrison chaplain, but he also helped to establish schools, orphanages, and a college for civil servants, and he was a leader in the establishment of work in India by the Church Missionary Society of England.[13] But generally the companies were opposed to missionary activity. All the semi-private companies operating in the India trade seemed to fear that the Indian population would become restless under Christian instruction, that moral judgments might become severe, and that education would disturb the labor balance. No doubt there was justification for these fears, for Christianity does bring changes in the social fabric.

Heurnius wrote a vigorous book arousing his countrymen to their Christian duty. His first missonary travel was to the island of Batavia where, after six years, he was imprisoned because he advo-

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[12] Cf. *Catholic Year Book*, 1962.
[13] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The History of the Expansion of Christianity.* New York: Harper and Row, 1944. Vol. VI, p. 100.

cated the independence of the Dutch church from the Dutch East India Company. Later he was sent to Java and Malaya. His principal contributions were in the large amount of translation work which he did for Ceylon, Java, and Malaya and the interest which he created in the Christian world for India and the East Indies. Today some of the strongest self-supporting constituencies in the world are in the former Dutch possessions; so the man who was forbidden to go to India became an instrument for God in the East Indies and laid the foundation for others to go to India.

Denmark in the India Trade

The last wave of planting which was extremely important to William Carey, the Baptist Pioneer, came when the King of Denmark was stirred by his chaplain, Dr. Lutken, to a moral obligation for his non-Christian subjects overseas. In 1621 the Danes had entered the profitable trade with India and had established several bases along the coast by peaceful and honorable means of purchase and negotiation. One of the most important of these was at Tranquebar on the Coromandel Coast, some 140 miles southwest of Madras. Dr. Lutken learned of two young men, former students at the University of Halle in Germany, who seemed suitable for the proposed work overseas. The King was receptive, and he appointed Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschau.

More is known of the early life of Ziegenbalg than that of Plutschau. Ziegenbalg was the son of pious parents. When his mother died, it is said that she gathered her children around her and told them she was leaving them a treasure, "a very great treasure." When asked what it was she said, "Seek it in the Bible . . . I have watered every page with my tears." [14]

The two young men were ordained in Copenhagen and they sailed for India on November 24, 1705. They arrived in Tranquebar on July 9, 1706 and began their labors. Because this project was strongly favored by the King, the Danish East India Company officials did not oppose it openly. Moreover, the attitude of the

[14] Henry Clay Vedder, *Christian Epoch-Makers.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1908, p. 232.

Danish Company toward missionaries was somewhat less antagonistic than that of the Dutch and the British. It was later in Danish-controlled territory, near Calcutta, that the English Baptist pioneer, William Carey, was to have his first real opportunity.

Ziegenbalg and Plutschau began to master the Tamil language. These missionaries, sitting cross-legged on the floor, acquired the rudiments of the language by writing in the sand with sticks. They built a Protestant chapel which served as a place of Christian worship, opening for the first time on August 14, 1707. They undertook missionary tours and planted new congregations. By 1711 they had translated the New Testament into Tamil and were compiling a liturgy, hymns, and a dictionary. Seeing all this, the Danish authorities in India grew more and more impatient and intolerant. Finally Plutschau was arrested and dragged publicly through the streets on a charge of rebellion against authority. Ziegenbalg's arrest followed. But the reaction was not what the Danish governor expected. Public opinion, both in the colony and in Denmark, rose to the support of the missionaries. Of the imprisonment Ziegenbalg wrote that it "has been as a bell ringing far and wide throughout Europe to awaken many thousand souls to compassion for us and our young and growing community."[15]

We should also look briefly into the life of another remarkable missionary, Christian Friedrich Schwartz. Born in Germany, he was sent to India by the Danish church and later worked with the English. Living with the simplicity of the early disciples, principally on a diet of boiled rice and vegetables, he baptized many converts, and served as a chaplain to British garrisons in many locations. He founded one of the first primary schools. At the request of the British he undertook a difficult diplomatic mission to Prince Haidar Ali of Mysore who had said, "Send me a Christian! He shall not deceive me." Christian Schwartz was in his last years of a life held in honor by Indians and foreigners alike when William Carey's interest was aroused in India. No doubt Schwartz's works and writings were but another stage of the many momentous events which led to the modern missionary movement.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 237.

3

Baptist Pioneers in India

India's political-social development has been bound inextricably with the lives and influence of notable and influential personalities. The same is true of the growth of Christianity in India. In the context of the revolutionary and the political changes which are so much a part of India's past, a figure of tremendous importance to India and to the world history of Christianity was to emerge. This unusual man, William Carey, was destined to be both a trailblazer and a leader.

William Carey Becomes a Dissenter

William Carey was born in the little village of Paulerspury, a famous part of England on the old Roman road between London and Chester. His father was the village weaver, the local schoolmaster, and the parish clerk. Young William had a special aptitude for learning and was an avid reader, walking miles to secure books from neighbors. Although he loved flowers and gardens, undue exposure seemed to aggravate a skin disease, a serious liability for one who later would be laboring under the rays of the torrid tropical sun.

The educational opportunities in Paulerspury were limited. When Carey was sixteen years old his father apprenticed him to a shoemaker in the hamlet of Hackleton, nine miles from his home. As might be inferred from the fact that his father was the parish clerk, Carey had been brought up in the Church of England. However, George Fox, the senior apprentice with whom he worked, was what was called in those days a religious dissenter. This dissent was from the practices and policies of the established church.

Fox, the dissenter, was himself destined to become a noted Quaker leader.

There were many friendly discussions between the two and Carey's mind and spirit grew uneasy regarding the Bible teachings and doctrines. He was unsatisfied and inquisitive. While continuing to study he ultimately felt led to the Baptist viewpoint of the Scriptures. Baptists were few in England at that time and they met and worshiped under many limitations.

Carey applied to Dr. John Ryland of the small Baptist congregation in Northampton for baptism. An entry in Dr. Ryland's journal for October 5, 1783 reads, "This day baptized a poor journeyman shoemaker."[1] By coincidence the sermon that morning was on the theme, "Many first shall be last, and the last first." How prophetic those words were only missionary history had been able to record. Who could have dreamed that a poor journeyman shoemaker would write another glorious chapter in the annals of the faith?

A Meeting in a Widow's Parlor

A short time later Carey was licensed to preach, and he frequently occupied neighboring pulpits. For the next seven years he read assiduously, often from a book propped in front of him while he was at the bench going about his daily task of mending shoes. In the meanwhile he learned to read Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Dutch. But he also perused with avidity the newer books of travel and adventure, such as Captain Cook's account of his voyage around the world. He was deeply moved by the appeals of the pioneer missionaries like Christian Schwartz and others of whom we have read in an earlier chapter. It was from this reading of travel and missionary adventure that there began to formulate in his mind the idea of personal service overseas.

William Carey was ordained to the ministry at the Moulton Baptist Church, which called him to be its pastor. From then on he began to expound ideas of a heathen world in need of the gospel. He repeatedly met with rebukes and sarcasm. Even such

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 288.

a good friend as Dr. Ryland is reported to have censured him lightly for his enthusiasm.

But Carey was burdened by the feeling of a personal and immediate obligation. After much study and reading he published a tract under the lengthy title: *An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen.* The work contained accurate statistical information and pleaded for the right of every man to share in the revelation of God through Jesus Christ. At first it met only a limited response.

However, Carey's great opportunity came when he was chosen as the preacher for the Association meeting at Nottingham on May 30, 1792. He chose for his text Isaiah 54:2-3. He portrayed Israel's tent stretching forth until her children inhabited the nations and peopled the desolate cities. He had two main points to his discourse, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." It was one of those momentous occasions when a man and a plan seem to have been brought together by Divine Providence. Some of the ministers were aroused to action and a minute was recorded that "a plan be prepared for the next ministers' meeting at Kettering for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the heathen."

Carey Arrives in India

On October 2 the interested ministers met again, this time in the parlor of the Widow Wallis. They organized and formed "The Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen." They set up a treasury. The twelve members present contributed to the treasury thirteen pounds, two shillings, and sixpence. With that sacrificial gift the modern missionary movement was born. Less than a year later, in June 1793, the new society appointed the first missionaries, the Reverend William Carey and Dr. John Thomas. The latter was a surgeon who had already had some experience in India as a doctor with the East India Company. A new era for Protestant missions was begun.

The balance of this book could well be given to Carey's contribution and achievements. There are several outstanding biogra-

phies that are rich in human warmth and which furnish the details of Carey's life and accomplishments for the interested reader.[2] Suffice it to say that his mission to India was not completed without undergoing tribulation and hardships which would have daunted a man of less courage and faith. First of all he and Dr. Thomas experienced great difficulty in getting transportation, due to the East India Company's policy of not encouraging mission work. They ultimately secured passage on a Danish ship, the *Kron Princess Maria* of 600 tons. Carey with his wife and four children sailed from Dover on June 13, 1793. Dr. Thomas, who had induced Carey to go to India rather than the islands of the Pacific, seems to have used what limited funds were available both irresponsibly and largely for his own interests. Under the adjustment to the new and strange environment, Carey's wife developed a mental condition which was a great burden until her premature death in 1807.

To make matters more complicated, the Carey party was not permitted by the East India Company to take up permanent residence in Calcutta. For Carey's first six years in India he served as superintendent of an indigo factory not far from the port city. During this period, in spite of his heavy duties and frequent illnesses, he found time to study Sanskrit, to translate most of the Bible into Bengali and to make a careful botanical survey of India's plants and trees. His feeling, however, was that above all else he had been called to be a missionary. He decided to accept the Danish governor's invitation to begin a mission in Serampore, approximately fifteen miles from Calcutta and under the more friendly Danish flag.

A Life of Accomplishment

Serampore became the center of striking developments for English Baptists. Here Carey labored with William Ward, the printer and newspaper editor, and Joshua Marshman, the schoolmaster. Here was the beginning of Serampore College with its unique

[2] George Smith, *The Life of William Carey.* London: John Murray, 1885. S. Pearce Carey, *William Carey.* London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1923. Ada P. Stearns, *William Carey.* Pamphlet. London: Carey Press, 8th edition, 1934.

contribution to Indian intellectual life.[3] On July 15, 1818, the three colleagues issued a prospectus, according to which the institution was to be "A college for the instruction of Asiatic Christians and other Youth in Eastern Literature and European Science."

Here began one of the greatest of literary and translation programs of all missionary history. In this intellectual and cultural atmosphere Carey remained until 1830 working with his Serampore colleagues. The story of the difficulties he encountered as he sought to push forward his many projects is a heroic one. His scholarly attitudes and his comprehension of the problems of that day constitute an imposing example of how far-reaching the life and influence of one man can be. If there are those who think that all early missionary endeavors were narrow, and limited by the type of missionary caricatured in some of our modern cartoons and novels, let them read the following list of accomplishments by William Carey and be disillusioned. He introduced the steam engine into India; he published the first newspaper in the vernacular; he assisted in the complete or partial translation of the Bible into forty languages and dialects; he made the first efforts to educate women and girls; he won the first convert from Hinduism to Protestant Christianity in the Calcutta area; he established the first primary school, the first medical mission, and the first botanical garden and society for the improvement of agriculture in India; and he made the first translation of the Sanskrit classics.

Carey continued his work in Serampore until his reputation for knowledge and study of Bengali led to a call for him to occupy the important chair of Bengali College, in Fort William, a government institution founded by Lord Wellesley. He died in 1834, but the wide interest he engendered in missions in America was to be a suitable framework upon which Baptists of the United States were to begin to build.

Perhaps of all of Carey's proposals, one of the utmost significance was that there should be a world conference of all missionary denominations to coordinate the plans for preaching the gospel

[3] Wilma S. Stewart, *The Story of Serampore and Its College.* India: Council of Serampore College, 1961.

of salvation in all parts of the earth. He even suggested the place and the time: that it should be at the Cape of Good Hope in 1810, a central point for sailing ships going both east and west.[4]

Of course Carey's thinking was far ahead of his day. It was some fifty years later before the first all-India Christian Conference was held. It was in 1921, more than a century later, when the International Missionary Council was organized. At New Delhi in 1961 the International Missionary Council became the Division of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches.

Carey Inspires Judson

The life of Carey is important to American Baptists in many ways. He was not only a great Christian leader but a fellow Baptist as well. It was under the inspiration of his writing that a suitable framework of missionary interest was erected which was to reach across the ocean to the United States. In the summer of 1806 in Massachusetts, five Williams College students, caught in a thunderstorm, took refuge under a haystack. They discussed the world of spiritual darkness made vivid by Carey and his colleagues. They debated their own responsibility to it, and finally sealed their pledges in prayer. A brotherhood was formed to pray regularly for Asia's needy. The movement spread to the seminary where Adoniram Judson became the recognized leader of the group.

The subsequent story of how Adoniram and Ann Judson were appointed to service in India, and on arrival were ordered deported, and how they became refugees and pioneers in Burma is familiar to most American Baptists. Burma before her independence was one of the richest provinces of British India. The whole history of Burma is so intertwined with that of India that it is difficult to draw a line of separation. It was Felix Carey, eldest son of William Carey, who promised shelter and counsel for the Judsons on their arrival at the inhospitable port of Rangoon, Burma. Although differing greatly in flora, fauna, religious background, and ethnic origin, the history of Burma and India ran closely parallel under British administration until Burma became a

[4] Latourette, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

self-governing unit in the British Commonwealth in 1937 and the independent Union of Burma was constituted in 1948. The story of suffering, hardship, and sacrifice which led American Baptists to India and thence to Burma is one of which we are humbly proud.

William Carey's death had occurred just two years prior to the founding in 1836 of the three American Baptist Missions in India, —Assam, Bengal-Orissa, and South India.[5] Let us take a backward glance at some of the influences at work at the time of Carey's death. Humanitarian impulses were running strong and a new sympathy was being expressed for the pauper, the criminal, the debtor, and the slave in England. During this period in the early 1830's Great Britain began to embark on a new colonial policy. Lord William Bentinck became Governor General of India (1828-1835). He was said to have been "the first Governor General to act conspicuously on the theory that the welfare of the subject people is the primary duty of the British in India." Over much opposition he instituted a whole series of beneficial reforms. Infanticide and the burning of widows was made illegal. Active measures were taken to suppress the Thugs, a fraternity of hereditary assassins who robbed their victims and strangled them with a turban in honor of the goddess Kali to whom they paid tribute. Indian Christians were admitted to hold office and to positions of private and government responsibility. This had previously been forbidden by the East India Company in the fear of stirring political and religious animosities. The civil service was thrown open with the understanding that there should be no exclusion on account of creed, caste, or social background. Until this time, to prevent defections from their faith, the Hindus had enacted laws providing that property could descend only to those who performed the funeral rites for a deceased parent with a ritual according to Hindu custom. This meant that Christians and others who left the Hindu faith were deprived of their inheritance. These old Hindu laws of inheritance were superseded by more liberal legislation under the new colonial policy of the 1830's.

[5] For convenience the names used are those by which the missions have been historically identified rather than the provincial names of modern India.

Thus, this was a particularly favorable period, from a Christian viewpoint, for American Baptists to enter into the life of India by opening three new fields.

India, Land of Contrasts

The three parts of India—Assam, Bengal-Orissa, and South India—into which recruits from the Baptists in America would go, were almost as different as if they had been in separate worlds. India is a land of contrasts in climate, wealth, caste, race, religions, languages, cultural patterns, and responsiveness to the Christian witness. Climate varies from the sub-zero temperatures of the lower Himalayan mountains to the 115° and 120° summer temperatures on the dry and barren plains. We have already noted the multiplicity of racial backgrounds which are included in the term "Indian people." Religious customs and rites include the monotheism of Islam, the polytheism of Hinduism, and the spirit worship of the animists. Languages vary from the highly developed Sanskrit, rich in content, to the more meager vocabularies of the hill tribes of Assam. Characteristic differences range from the highly cultured, well-educated Brahman, Muslim, and Christian communities to the more primitive tribes in the jungle and mountain fastnesses of northern India. Sir Frederick Whyte, of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, has said, "The most striking fact about the people of India is their varied character. There are in India more differences of race, language and religion than in the whole of western Europe from Finland to Gibraltar, an area approximately equal to India."[6]

The vastness of India, the varied geographical features, the striking differences in racial backgrounds and in customs, religion, and culture make any discussion of the whole of India complex and baffling. India is shaped like a great triangle washed on two sides by the ocean. Its latitude is from eight degrees north to thirty-five degrees north, a distance of nearly 2000 miles, the approximate mileage between San Francisco and Anchorage. At

[6] Sir Frederick Whyte, *India—A Bird's Eye View.* London: Oxford University Press, 1943, p. 7.

the widest point India is 1800 miles from East to West, the distance from New York to Salt Lake City. On the northern borders are the wind-swept highlands and the great snow-capped ranges of the Himalayan mountains, some of which are nearly 5 miles high. On the south, India is separated from tropical Ceylon by the Gulf of Mannar.

Three great rivers have played an important part in the conquests and history of India. We have already mentioned the Indus, which was the goal of Darius and of Alexander the Great and of the early Mohammedan conquerors. The Indus now lies largely within the newly created country of West Pakistan, although some of the water rights are a part of a bitter dispute with India. It drains into the Indian Ocean. The Ganges, often called "Mother Ganges," flowing across the northern provinces, is the sacred river to which thousands of Hindu pilgrims journey. They seek the holy places on the river, such as Benares, for the sake of merit. Some believe that if only they can die on its banks and their ashes can be placed on the river they will be brought close to the perfect life in the next world.

The third great river is important to our missions in both Assam and Bengal. It is the Brahmaputra which unites with the Ganges to pour its waters into the vast delta area along the Bay of Bengal. These rivers have brought both life and tragedy: water which is so urgently needed for the crops, and destruction and havoc with the periodic floods. There are some hills and mountain ranges in India that follow the coastal areas. These have provided cool elevations with relief from the blistering heat of the India plains. One of these retreats is Kodaikanal in South India where many American Baptist missionary children from India, Burma, and Thailand have had their elementary or high school education, or both. Another school for missionary children is located at Landour in the cool Himalayan area.

Geography of the India Fields

In geography the three Baptist fields in India present a decided contrast. Assam can best be described by two words:

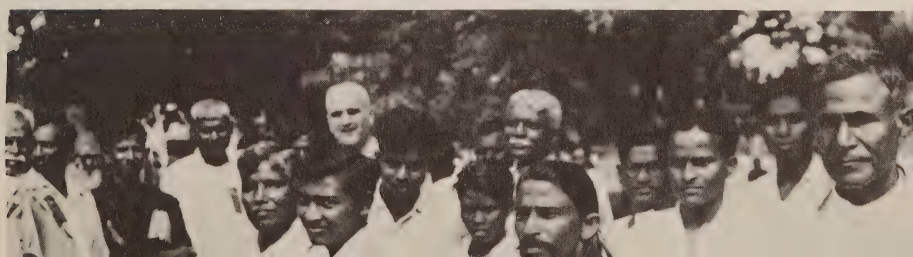
mountains and plains. Two great valleys, the Surma and the Brahmaputra are separated by plateaus and the mountain ranges from forty-seven hundred feet in the Garo Hills to ten thousand feet in the Naga Hills. Bengal is in the hot, humid, densely populated river basin of the lower Ganges and the Buralang or "Old Twister" river. The South India Mission is on the torrid, semi-arid plain north and northwest of the city of Madras.

The Varied Climate

Just as there are sharp variations in geography there are contrasts in the weather and in the rainfall, which is distributed with great irregularity. These features of climate have had an effect on mission program and have contributed directly to the problems in the Assam, Bengal-Orissa, and South India Missions. The distribution of moisture and rainfall is tremendously important. It has a bearing on how people live, what their crops are, and their general economic status. In some of the arid regions of South India the rainfall is fifteen inches or less per year with an average year-round temperature of eighty degrees. On the other hand, in the hills and valleys of Assam the rainfall is generally plentiful and vegetation is luxuriant. Variations of seasons occur in the hill area. In Bengal and Orissa the climate is hot and damp most of the year, with temperatures ranging from fifty degrees to 110 degrees.

Vegetation varies from the spare fields of millet and grain in the south to the more exotic tropical plants and trees of the northern river valleys. In some parts of India wild animals such as elephants, jackals, wolves, leopards, bears, hyenas, antelopes, wild boars, and monkeys are found in variety. Also there are crocodiles, deadly snakes including the dreaded cobra, eagles, vultures, falcons, peacocks, parrots, and storks.

Group of preachers, South India.



The Varied Peoples

In addition to the variations in climate, rainfall, and temperature there are contrasts in people. The peoples among whom American Baptists work in their three major areas of responsibilities impress us with the wide range of differences, racially, linguistically, socially, and economically. In Assam the peoples of the plains, the Assamese, are largely Hindu, representing a little more than half the total population. Muslims claim about one quarter of the population. Except for the increasing number of Christians and a relatively few Buddhists, the remainder are the hill peoples, who are largely animistic in religion. They seek to appease the spirits that they believe live in the trees, the stones, and the waterfalls. The Nagas, the Garos, and the Manipuris, many of whom have become Christian, are in this group. In Assam American Baptist work is largely among the Hindus and animists.

In Bengal-Orissa the Baptist work is conducted principally among three races. The first of these consists of the proud and aristocratic Bengali and the Oriyas, who are descendants of the early Aryans and represent one of the strongest bastions of Hinduism. The other racial groups are the indigenous Santals and the Koras, closely related animistic peoples not bound by caste. Their ancestors were probably the original inhabitants of the area. They live in the foothills and make their living principally by trade with their Hindu neighbors in wood, coal, and products of the hills, and by primitive farming.

In South India is a people of totally different language and background. The Telugus live on the dry plains north and northwest of Madras. There are more than twenty-five millions of them, one of the largest single language groups in India. The name Telugu (or Teloogoo as it is spelled in some of the older books) does not indicate either a country or a people. It is a language, one of the five principal forms of the Dravidian carried down from the early invasions. Tradition has it that the god Siva descended from heaven and placed his emblem on three mountains in India, thereby marking out the natural boundaries

of a country called "Trilinga," from which the name Telinga, Tenegu or Telugu was ultimately derived. The use of Telugu is an apt illustration of how a common language accepted by people of widely different racial stocks, with divergent habits and customs, and even representing different castes can be a cohesive force of strength and durability.

Among the Telugu-speaking peoples are the outcaste groups or, as some authors prefer to say, the Panchamas or fifth caste, who inherit the dark skins of their forefathers and perform the menial tasks. Also included in the Telugu language area are the descendants of the pure Aryan stock, whose ancestors came in from the North and who became the dominant class, the priestly Brahmans. Between these two extremes of the social scale is the Sudra caste, representing the farmers and the artisans and with its many subdivisions comprising the middle classes of Indian life. A few wandering gypsy tribes, presumed to be descendants of a poor hill people indigenous to the southern part of India, live in the South India area and dwell as neighbors to the caste people in the towns and villages. Distinct in race and religion, but also speaking Telugu, are the Muslims, descendants of the great conquering hordes from Persia, Arabia, and Afghanistan. Indeed, in this one language area there is a curious melange of race and culture.

American Baptist Program Initiated

It is an interesting phenomenon that the Baptist program in India had its beginning in all three fields at about the same time. The dedicated work of Carey, Ward, and Marshman in India, and of the Judsons and Boardmans in Burma, as well as other flaming evangelistic spirits, had aroused a wide interest in the United States and England. Stirring reports from India and Burma were challenging others of God's messengers to search for pioneer areas as yet untouched by Christian influence. Thus it came about that the work in the province of Assam was started primarily not to expand the English Baptist program in India, but to reach out into new and unexplored frontiers.

Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice had become Baptists by conviction en route to India. In response to their appeals the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination of the U.S.A. for Foreign Missions was organized in Philadelphia on May 21, 1814, by twenty ministers and seven laymen. It became known as the Triennial Convention because the general meetings were scheduled every three years. By 1835 the members of the Triennial Baptist Convention had been deeply impressed with the work of Robert Morrison, pioneer in China. Therefore, the Board voted to open a mission to China "so soon as God's Providence shall put the facilities for so doing within our reach." The port cities of the Celestial Empire of China were then closed to the commerce of the world.

The Assam Mission

The Corresponding Secretary of the Triennial Convention wrote a letter to the Reverend Wm. H. Pearce of the English Baptist Mission in Calcutta inquiring about the new fields. This letter elicited an interesting reply. Mr. Pearce was acquainted with some of the British officials in North India. By a strange but divine coincidence a Major Jenkins was British Commissioner for the then wild and uncivilized northeast frontier province of Assam. A godly man, he recognized the benefits of a spiritual reformation that might come to the primitive people who were then under his administration. From his headquarters in Gauhati, then spelled Gowhotti, he wrote a letter on March 10, 1835, which read in part, "The ground which I would particularly call to their attention [American Baptists] is in the northeastern district of Assam. . . . Here is an ample field; it extends all over north and west of China."

About the time Major Jenkins wrote his letter, the British Government in India was planning to send an official mission to China via the overland route from India to investigate the possibilities of tea culture. The great tea industry was yet in its infancy, but was later to develop into one of the most important commercial enterprises of Assam. Dedicated missionaries from

Burma hoped that they might join one of these government missions passing through the Great Wall of China to carry the message of Christ over the route of inland trade.

The news reached the infant Burma Mission of British Commissioner Jenkins' offer; namely, a grant of Rs. 1000 if missionaries would settle in Assam, and a thousand more if they would set up a printing plant. Although that mission was already overburdened and understaffed, the leaders did not hesitate. Nathan Brown, who was to serve under the mission societies with distinction in both Assam and Japan, was one of those set apart for the mission to China. O. T. Cutter, a practical printer, was another. The story of their eight hundred-mile trip across the Bay of Bengal and up the Brahmaputra River through fever-infested jungles to their first station at Sadiya is an exciting epic.[7] Only one who had the spirit and dedication of Adoniram Judson could have written, as he did: "My heart leaps for joy to think of Brother Brown in Sadiya and of the intervening stations between here and Bangkok, Siam. Happy lot to live in these days." So, under the providence of God, were the beginnings in Assam.

The Bengal-Orissa Mission

During the same year, 1835, events of tremendous importance for Baptists were taking place in Bengal and Orissa. English General Baptists under the influence of William Carey and his associates had sent William Bampton and James Pegg and their families to Bengal in 1820. The Baptists in England were a humble people whose limited resources were insufficient to take advantage of the opportunities in Bengal and Orissa. There was a feeling in 1825 that Midnapore and Balasore, both growing communities, should have a Christian mission. Early in 1824 the Rev. and Mrs. Amos Sutton from England had joined the Bamptons and the Peggs. Mrs. Sutton died soon after their arrival. A little over a year later Mr. Sutton married again, this time the widow of the Reverend James Colman, whose life had been cut

[7] See Louise A. Cattan and Helen C. Schmitz, *One Mark of Greatness.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1961, p. 8.

off by jungle fever after only a year of service with Judson in Burma. Mrs. Colman had recently been teaching in Calcutta.

Mrs. Sutton was a devout woman and had a deep interest in the newly constituted English Baptist Mission in Bengal. She told her husband of the Free Will Baptists, a small but consecrated group of Baptists in America who had not yet been actively aroused to foreign missionary endeavors. Their views closely resembled those of the English Baptist mission. When Mr. Sutton was visiting in the city of Puri, where the great temple of the Juggernaut is located, he was so impressed with the idolatrous worship and the wretched condition of the people that he wrote a letter seeking to enlist the support of the Free Will Baptists in America.

Alas! When it was time to mail the communication Mrs. Sutton could not remember the address of Elder Buzzell, the editor of the *Morning Star,* the Free Will Baptist paper. But here again "Providence," mentioned prominently in early missionary narratives, seems to have played a most important part. Several months later a package for Mrs. Sutton arrived from America. It was wrapped with a copy of the *Morning Star.* The letter which had been put aside for want of an address was now forwarded on its long journey. In due course, the *Morning Star* dated April 13, 1832, carried to the members of the Free Will Baptist churches an inspiring challenge to expand their sphere of usefulness. The reponse was immediate. The foreign mission society of this small but intelligent denomination was subsequently organized at North Parsonfield, Maine, in the autumn of 1832. The act of its incorporation was approved by the Maine legislature on January 29, 1833. But the influence of the Suttons was not to end here.

Mr. Sutton tells his moving story in a book called *The Mission to Orissa,* written while he was homeward bound on the sailing ship *Fenelon.* In the preface he complained in a kindly way that his "floating study was so thronged with passengers and rendered so incommodious by the variety of business transacted in it that very little opportunity for literary pursuits was offered him." Nevertheless his volume consisted of 422 pages in small type.

It was published by Samuel N. Dickinson, Printer, in Boston, 1833.[8] In his introductory remarks Mr. Sutton expressed the hope that he might afford instruction acceptable to the Christian reader. He intimated that he had chosen to visit the United States for two purposes: first, "with a view to the restoration of his health," and second, "with a hope of awakening the attention of his brethren in that part of the world to the importance of missionary exertion."

"As I arise to speak, I seem to see the millions of India with bended knee and tearful eyes saying, 'Sir, plead our cause—plead it effectually.'" Mr. Sutton, a pale, emaciated man, with eyes deepset in a face which clearly showed the effects of the ravages of tropical fevers, addressed these words to more than three thousand people seated on a sloping field above the waters of beautiful Lake Winnipesaukee in New Hampshire on a bright June day in 1835. Many of the audience were attending their first missionary meeting. The response to the challenge was immediate. The spirit in which the new enterprise was launched is reflected in the quaint phraseology of the appeal:

> Within a few months past the cry of Asia's heathen sons has been wafted across the mighty deep, borne upon the gentle gales and reverberated through our connection. We have heard groans of the victim dying beneath the wheels of Juggernaut, the shrieks of the widow burning on the funeral pile. Nay, in our minds, we have seen millions of human beings enter eternity, without the knowledge of the way of life. With such a view, we begin to feel, yes we begin to act, in a short time with the blessing of God, we shall send them help.[9]

Mr. Sutton was elected corresponding secretary of the new Society and served two years in this capacity. He returned to India in 1835 in company with twenty-one missionaries who were to scatter into all parts of the Orient. Most of them owed their interest to Mr. Sutton's vivid and timely presentations. He was enabled to appeal effectively to the various Baptist and other

[8] This book was available to the author from the personal library of Dr. A. W. Jefferson, former member of the Board of the ABFMS, and now deceased.

[9] From a paper read by Dr. A. W. Jefferson at a joint session of the Board of Managers of the ABFMS and the WABFMS, January 17, 1933.

denominational groups because of the broad and liberal opinions on interdenominational relationships which were held by the English Baptist group of which he was a part. For approximately seventy-five years the small but consecrated group of Free Will Baptists carried on their own overseas program. At their conference in Ocean Park, Maine, in July, 1910, after much discussion, this gallant band of missionary-minded people voted to transfer the missionary work of the Bengal-Orissa field to the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, a wonderful bequeath.

The South India Mission

The enlistment of interest in Bengal and Orissa was not the end of the wide influence of the Rev. Amos Sutton, the English Baptist. Another mission, dear to the hearts of American Baptists, was coming into being during this same historic year of 1835. It was the dedicated Suttons who directed the attention of the Board of Managers of the Triennal Convention to the millions in South India who spoke the "Teloogoo" language. Early in 1835 a vote had been passed by the Board of the Triennial Convention authorizing the beginning of work in China and the appointment of a committee on "New Fields of Missionary Labors." Although many things have changed during the century, the necessity for committees seems to have prevailed even in that day. However, there is a difference in committees. Not all of them take their tasks as seriously as this one did. Mr. Sutton was invited to address the newly formed committee because of its special interest in Mrs. Sutton, the former Mrs. Colman.

The members listened with eagerness to the report of Mrs. Sutton that there was a great territory without the gospel in South India, south of Orissa, embracing approximately seventy-five thousand square miles and millions of people who spoke essentially one language. The conclusions of the small group to whom the matter was referred are recorded in *The American Baptist Magazine* for June, 1835. The cogent reasons which they gave underlying the need and supporting the proposed advance make interesting reading today, although it is probable that

Women pounding grain for their families.

when the report was written there was no thought that more than a hundred years later it would be regarded as a unique historical document. Regrettably, the men who signed the report did not live to see the full fruitage of their well-defined plan.

Not only was the report of the committee proposing a forward move in India accepted by the Board, but steps were taken to put the new plan into immediate operation. Soon a missionary family would be on the way to South India. Thus, the preliminary steps for three great missions in India were initiated.

4

American Baptists at Work in India

The three missions in India, Assam in northeast India, Bengal-Orissa in north-central India, and South India, all had their actual beginnings in the same year.

Each, under the providence of God, was to contribute to a new era of interest by American Baptists. Each went through periods of hardship, frustration, and near closing because of lack of funds or faith. Yet each of them has been privileged during the last century and a quarter to see the hand of God at work in a remarkable way.

A Historic Year

It was on March 23, 1836, that the Rev. Nathan Brown, Mr. Cutter the printer, and their families arrived in Sadiya, Assam, after a tedious journey of four months from Calcutta. The old letters tell a graphic story of the journey across the Bay of Calcutta and up the broad Brahmaputra River. Mr. Brown writes that their little son, William, became ill on the day before they were to leave Moulmein, Burma, and was buried on their sailing day. Then, their lovely little daughter, Dorothy Sophia, was taken soon after their arrival in Sadiya. Mrs. Brown was seriously incapacitated with malaria. Yet Mr. Brown could write to his Burma colleagues "On this spot we hope to spend the remainder of our days." In the midst of such personal tragedy the work in Assam was begun.

We have already noted what a tremendous influence the Rev.

and Mrs. Amos Sutton had exerted during their furlough from India among the Free Will Baptist churches and in the Triennial Convention of the United States. Their influence during their widespread travels touched hearts and brought numerous volunteers for the work in India. Mr. Sutton gave up his position as Corresponding Secretary of the Free Will Baptist denomination, which he held from 1833 to 1835, and returned to India.

Among twenty-one missionaries who sailed with the Suttons and who had volunteered under their inspiration, were the Rev. and Mrs. Eli Noyes and the Rev. and Mrs. Jeremiah Phillips of the newly organized Free Will Baptist group. They arrived on the Orissa field in February, 1836, spending some time with English Baptist colleagues at Cuttack in Orissa before deciding on the exact whereabouts of their own stations of work. The Eli Noyes and Jeremiah Phillips families were to be Baptist pioneers in Orissa. Their work was later to be extended to the states of Bengal and Bihar. Thus the second American Baptist field in India was begun in 1836 along the famous Juggernaut Road.

The Juggernaut was one of the most important of the Hindu deities in Bengal and Orissa. Each year a festival was held when, to the music of bands and the acclaim of his followers, this sacred god was drawn on a wooden, wheeled cart to a neighboring temple for a visit to his maternal aunt. Frenzied devotees by the thousands followed the idol car, which passed along the old Juggernaut Road which began near Delhi and connected the sacred cities of Benares and Puri. Cholera and other devastating diseases were often silent partners on the pilgrimage. One early missionary wrote, "Our home is but a few rods from the Juggernaut Road and we see large numbers of pilgrims pass daily—a painful sight. Some have died under a large banyan tree near our house and no man careth for their bodies and souls." Scenes like these aroused Christian concern and action in 1836.

By a providential coincidence the Baptist program in South India was also to have its actual initiation in 1836. We have already noted that a Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Stearns Day had applied to the Triennial Convention at just about the time that the

attention of the Board's committee on "New Fields of Missionary Labors" was being directed to South India by Mrs. Amos Sutton. The Days had volunteered for work among the American Indians in the West, which was then under the direction of the Triennial Convention. But God was leading them to those other Indians of the Orient. To the Board they seemed eminently fitted to open the mission in South India. They responded to the Board's challenge with a zeal and faith that was to mark all their years of service. Within three months after the committee report had been published they were on their way, sailing from Boston harbor on the *Louvre* on September 22, 1835. With them on the long journey went Dr. Howard Malcolm,[1] the first representative of the Triennial Convention commissioned to survey the fields and report back to the Board and its committee. The little party arrived in Calcutta on February 5, 1836. The procedure to be followed in opening the work had been left to the missionaries in consultation with Dr. Malcolm and to "the indications of Providence." It was finally decided that Rev. E. L. Abbott who was also traveling with the party should go to the Karens in Burma, a people eager to see the "white book" and welcome "the white teacher."

A very different reception was to await Mr. and Mrs. Day, who were to have the honor of becoming the founders of the South India work in that same fateful year of 1836. At the end of seventeen years, their annual report of September 30, 1853, carried the following distressing story.

> Brother Day was violently attacked with his old complaint. After struggling with a disease which proved absolutely incurable in India he left with strength hardly sufficient to justify the hope that he would survive the journey to Madras.
>
> One has been added to the church by baptism, and one has been excluded. The present number is five. The number is small, but all, we believe, are regenerated persons.[2]

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[1] See Howard Malcolm, *Travels in South Eastern Asia.* Valley Forge: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1839.

[2] Dana M. Albaugh, *Between Two Centuries.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1935, p. 92.

Such were the humble beginnings in the midst of discouragement in South India in 1836. But the third field in India was opened!

A Year of Celebration

More than one hundred and twenty-five years have gone by since those early beginnings in 1836. Celebrations in 1961 portrayed the changes of the years. Commemorative programs with special speakers were held in all three areas.

The celebrations took their most dramatic form in that far northeast corner of India which we know as Assam. Here the festivities depicted in a vivid way God's blessings through the years. They covered a period of four days. The theme was "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World."

In the crowded city of Gauhati, Assam, special "hotels" had to be built of bamboo and thatch to accommodate the many delegates. People came by buses, jeeps, and trucks. One truck had so much luggage piled on its top that it knocked down the archway leading to the mission compound. A great *pandal* or meeting house of bamboo and thatch was constructed. Books, posters, and signs proclaimed the theme and formed the background for a lower platform for the choir and a higher platform for the speakers. There were 10 choirs representing that many different language areas, varying in size from 20 to 150. Some of these rendered songs they had composed and fitted to their own tunes. Others sang such great masterpieces as Handel's Hallelujah Chorus. In contrast to the feeble beginnings of 125 years ago there was a large group of visitors from Europe, America, and other parts of Asia. Many of them were on their way to New Delhi, to the historic assembly of the World Council of Churches. This was the Council's third assembly, but the first to be held in Asia. As the guests proceeded to New Delhi, delegates from four areas of Northeast India accompanied them.

The number of registrations at Gauhati was over four thousand. The peak attendance with visitors numbered six thousand. Each group carried a banner with the name of its tribe or area and a

selected Scripture verse. On Sunday, eight thousand joined in a Procession of Witnesses, walking five abreast across the length of the town of Gauhati. While marching they sang songs in their own languages. Many from the Naga and Garo Hills were dressed in their "war" blankets of red, black, and yellow, and wore the headdress of black and white hornbill feathers, relics of a day not too long ago.

The exhibition hall was open to visitors every day with literature, filmstrips, and such handicrafts of the areas as woodworking, weaving, sewing, school displays, and Christian education materials, showing all phases of work within the Council of Baptist Churches of North East India, the national Baptist church organization in Assam.

Witnessing the Power of Reconciliation

The celebration brought together a wide assortment of people from the three states of Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur, who had little in common but the evident power of the gospel to change lives. About this, one missionary wrote: "The sari-clad matrons of the Assamese plains and the back country hill Nagas with their colorful cloths, and haircuts that look like the barber used a bowl for a guide, portray something more than interesting variety. They represent people who have almost nothing in common and who have been at war with each other for generation upon generation."[3] He goes on to say, "The strongest impression made upon me by this celebration is the power of reconciliation we have in Christ."

Many felt there might be disorder where so many people from so many parts of India were gathered together. However, the police chief of Gauhati, himself a Christian, predicted there would be no need for police protection. Nor was there! The meetings were an example of order and Christian concern for one another. But the sessions did not end merely with the celebration and programs.

[3] The Rev. Frederick S. Downs, *Newsletter,* Christmas, 1961.

A Home Mission Venture

The nearest neighbor to Assam is Nepal, a primitive, relatively unexplored mountain country. The delegates to the 125th Anniversary in Assam voted to raise a fund of Rs. 125,000 (Rs. 1000 for every year) or approximately $25,000 in U.S. terms. They allocated a part of this amount to help the new United Mission in Nepal. So the gospel message continues to spread. The power of reconciliation is extended to pioneer areas. The participants in this celebration were drawn from 2,456 churches with a membership of 168,385. Tears of joy would have flooded the faces of the Brown and Cutler families if they could have seen for themselves the work of the Spirit of God through 125 years of Christian fellowship. The vigor and evangelistic zeal manifest in the Assam celebration is characteristic of the growth and changes in all three India fields in this remarkable period.

The 125th anniversary commemorations were not as extensive in South India and Bengal-Orissa, but they carried the same note of thanksgiving for God's blessings of the past and the same hopeful optimism for the future. It must be remembered that, compared with today, American Baptists were a "feeble folk" in 1836 when these three fields were established. At that stage in history, the number of Baptists in both the North and South was about 385,000. These were men and women of courage and faith and with a vision of world need. The letters from Adoniram Judson and his colleagues in Burma had ignited the spiritual flames. Luther Rice, by his constant travel among the churches, had fanned the fires. The opening of pioneer areas of service was to provide additional fuel to awaken interest among the churches.

Bought with a Price

The accomplishments of 125 years are noteworthy. But American Baptists can never forget that these accomplishments have been bought with a price. Danger, hardship, privation, illness, and death were ever present. Many diseases were unconquerable in those earlier years. Smallpox, malaria, plague, leprosy, cholera, and tuberculosis were common. Little children were particularly

Courtesy Information Service of India

Gandhi's personal possessions.

Courtesy Information Service of India

Tenzing Norkay. Note Wheel of Asoka on Indian flag.

susceptible to the scourges of the tropics. The number of small missionary graves scattered over mission compounds in India is a testimony to the heartaches of many faithful witnesses.

On the fields there have often been problems of personality adjustments, acute differences in regard to mission policy, human frailties and failures, and inability to understand Indian culture and sensitivity. But with it all there has been love of the Indian brethren, faith, courage, consecration, and devotion. At the end of 125 years these are the memories of the Indian Christians who are now the leaders and the administrators.

Problems and difficulties have not all been on the field. From time to time the home boards and the constituency have not been as immediately and keenly aware of the changes taking place on the fields as they might have been. Sometimes there have been divisions in the ranks of the supporters at home. Often the denomination has not responded as generously with funds and support as the needs of the hour have demanded. Baptists cannot

forget the early years of the South India mission when on at least three separate occasions, there was discussion by the boards of abandoning the work which appeared so unfruitful. The first of these was in 1846, when Mr. Day was sent home as an invalid. Adoniram Judson was also at home on furlough at that time. That undaunted pioneer had stood before the Board and said, "I would cheerfully at my age cross the Bay of Bengal and learn a new language rather than by the lift of my hand vote for the abandonment of this work."

Again, in 1853, the Board voted to close the South India Mission in the light of the fact that "no more than three persons have been baptized since 1836" and that "there are no helpers in training and no immediate prospect of any." When the discussion was at its gloomiest, one of the speakers pointed to a map and referred to the one station of Nellore in South India as "the lone star." That symbol caught the imagination of Dr. Samuel Francis Smith, author of "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and "The Morning Light Is Breaking." He seized on the poetic reference, and that night wrote the famous hymn, "The Lone Star," the last verse of which reads:

> Shine on, "Lone Star!" till earth redeemed,
> In dust shall bid its idols fall;
> And thousands, where thy radiance beamed,
> Shall "crown the Savior, Lord of all."

The next morning Judge Harris, the presiding officer, read the hymn to the assemblage. Amidst tremendous applause the mission was saved once more.

In 1862 the question was again to arise. This time it was Dr. Lyman Jewett, at home and broken in health after fourteen unfruitful years in India, who turned the tide. After the separation of the churches of the North from those in the South of the United States in 1845, the Triennial Convention had changed its name to The American Baptist Missionary Union.[4] Dr. Jewett told the Executive Committee that even if the Missionary Union declined

[4] Robert G. Torbet, *Venture of Faith.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1955, p. 113.

to aid the struggling Indian mission, if he were granted health he would return alone and "live and if need be die among the Telugus." One of the board members is reported to have remarked wryly, "Then we must surely send someone with you to provide a Christian burial!" The Telugu mission was saved for the third time. When the Jewetts sailed for India in 1864 they were accompanied by Rev. and Mrs. John E. Clough who were to write missionary history with their lives and attain a high place of affection among the Indian people and American Baptists alike. Under the leadership of the Cloughs the great mass movements of the Telugus toward Christianity had their beginnings. From the middle of June until the end of December, 1878, there were 9,608 who joined the church.[5] Two thousand, two hundred and twenty-two were baptized on that historic day of June 3. These converts were largely from the outcastes but the methods and devotion of the Cloughs built a suitable framework for later similar movements among higher castes, particularly the artisans and agricultural workers.

What God Hath Wrought

Old files of missionary letters and missionary magazines and periodicals tell a poignant and vivid story of the expansion of the work in the three fields. At first the emphasis was primarily on evangelism. Then came appeals to the hearts of the missionaries by the blind, deaf, handicapped, victims of leprosy, orphans, and the less privileged members of Indian society. Soon there came the recognition of a need for literature and education. The small mission schools began to expand into major training institutions offering various levels of work. Hospitals were founded and dispensaries were located in isolated places. In more recent years informal activities such as youth retreats, camp programs, newspaper evangelism, Bible correspondence courses, lay and stewardship training, evangelism institutes, rural improvements, Christian centers, and ministries to industrial centers have been

[5] Dana M. Albaugh, *Between Two Centuries.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1935.

undertaken. This is only a partial list of the varied avenues and highly specialized activities that are pursued today to proclaim the riches of the gospel of Christ.

Lights and Shadows

In 1961 the numerical count in the three fields of India revealed that there were 2,675 churches, 335,886 church members, and 2,446 national Indian workers in churches, schools, and hospitals. There were 14,529 baptisms in that year, and over a hundred thousand patients in hospitals and dispensaries on the three fields.

The greatest number of baptisms and the largest number of church members are recorded in Assam and in South India, where the response has been more ready than in the Bengal-Orissa mission. In 1961, after 125 years, the total church membership in Bengal-Orissa was only 4,569. Writing in 1921, Joseph C. Robbins, then foreign secretary, said: "India is the most difficult mission field in the world and Bengal is the most difficult field in India."[6] This situation has not changed greatly. Bengal is a province of intellectual attainment. It is the home of many national leaders including the famous poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and a center of Hindu culture and religion. Bengal has relatively few animistic and aboriginal people but, instead, is the center of a highly developed form of Hinduism. The province is one of the areas of greatest density of rural population in the world and presents strategic opportunities for the Christian witness.

In these 125 years of service to the peoples of India there have been many bright lights and some dark shadows. Truly Baptists were a "feeble" folk in 1836 when the three India missions were started, but they have been blessed richly through the years. The strength of the Baptist cause is a testimony to a loyal church constituency, consecrated Indian and missionary leaders, and policies of administration forged in the temper of the times.

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[6] Joseph C. Robbins, *Following the Pioneer.* Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1922, p. 121.

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Vanishing Guideposts and New Trails

However brilliant the history of missions in India may have been, the primary importance for this study is the direction in which it points for the future of the Christian church. With the emergence of an independent India, the guideposts that marked a past century of missionary endeavor in a colonial period have been largely obliterated. This fact plays an important part in the future role of mission societies. Attitudes and decisions of government authorities can be expected to be quite different from the traditional when they represent a predominantly Hindu population and a people striving for a place of dignity in a world of economic and political competition.

The Christian program must commend itself in an atmosphere of intense national spirit and self-esteem. India has a justifiable pride in her long history, splendid achievements, art and literature, and the highly intellectual and talented people who are her leaders. While she recognizes that she has a long way to go to meet western standards of literacy, per capita income, and production of capital goods, India seeks to achieve these goals by her own methods and in her own way. She is willing to evaluate advice and help, but wants to be free to accept or reject it as may best seem to meet her national ideals and purposes.

Christians Speak at Bangalore

Christians in the United States too often grow impatient with these strong nationalistic sentiments without understanding

the historical, social, and religious factors which make the propagation of the gospel in India quite different from evangelism in the favored milieu of the United States. In 1954 a group of one hundred Indian Christians representing hundreds of Protestant churches and institutions met at Bangalore. Their findings were reported in a message entitled "Therefore Witness."[1] These leaders discussed the prejudices and fears arising in the revolutionary nationalistic climate. They pointed out that the government of India is particularly apprehensive of a growth in communal groups, such as the Christian fellowship, in the fear that such groups might threaten her political unity. India remembers the bitter experience with Muslims who insisted on partition and the creation of Pakistan at the time of independence, and is acutely conscious of the agitation among the Nagas of Assam and other language groups for independence. During the years of British administration many Indians felt that Great Britain preserved her power by adroitly balancing the needs and opinions of various religious and linguistic groups one against another. Independent India has feared that any development of strong communal groups would be a substantial threat to her political and social unity. The Hindu majority is wary lest the growth in the strength of a Christian minority result in and perpetuate divisiveness in their country where Hinduism is so deeply embedded in the entire social fabric.

What Is the Right of Propagation?

Another fundamental difference between the Indian and American view is the interpretation of religious freedom and of the right of propagation which is guaranteed by the Constitution of India. The Bangalore report, referred to above, points this out clearly.

> Hindu thinking on this subject is largely conditioned by the traditional belief that God is unknowable, that all religions are partly true and partly false, and that no one religion can claim to have the

[1] Report of Conference, Bangalore, April 21-29, 1954, in *National Christian Council Review—India,* Vol. LXXIV, No. 6, June-July, 1954. The organ of the National Christian Council of India.

whole Truth. The Hindu's view of tolerance is based on his contention that all religions are equal, in that all are ways to God, thus making a change of community unnecessary, and indeed unfair and contrary to the true interests of national society. Thus, propagation for the Hindu is the preaching of the truth that is in a religion without requiring anyone who accepts it to change his religious and social affiliation. But for the Christian propagation is the whole process of preaching, conversion and reception into the fellowship of the Christian church.[2]

Here, then, is a vital, basic difference between Hinduism and Christianity in their approach and attitude. How to bridge this gap in a friendly, constructive way is a current challenge to the Christian Church in India.

Hinduism a Way of Life

Another former guidepost which has vanished since independence came to India was the special protection afforded the Christian religion and other minority religious groups by the British government. It has already been pointed out how India's entire religious and cultural structure has been influenced by Hinduism since the partition of India and Pakistan. Hinduism is embraced by approximately 85 per cent of India's inhabitants, and it leaves its imprint on every aspect of family and social life. It is hard for us in the United States to picture how completely the various rites and rules of Hinduism govern each day's living. The trip to the well, the place where one can draw water, the treatment of one's neighbor of the same or of a different caste, the rules covering the eating of food, the relationship between husband and wife, the marriage of daughters and sons, the planting of crops, the rituals at death, the worship at the temples, the care of cattle and other animals, the favoritism accorded the sacred bulls, the attitudes toward widows, the pilgrimages, and the festivals are all governed by minute rules of custom and religion.

A missionary, writing some of his first impressions in a semi-humorous vein, but with much perception, says:

> Where but in India do you find cattle given equal rights with man? We went into the main postoffice in Calcutta and there was a calf

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 259.

waiting in line at the stamp window. Outside of the post office in the busy street were several cows viewing with unconcern the trams and automobiles. In the United States a man crosses an intersection at risk of life and limb, in India one switch of a cow's tail and all traffic stops dead. The placidity of India's cows is contagious. . . . One Brahma bull, with red nail polish on his horns and a garland of flowers about his neck . . . would do more to ease world tensions than a four power conference.[3]

We will miss the point of these comments unless we recognize that the religious veneration of cattle is woven into the warp and woof of India's social fabric and that these religious implications cannot be separated from daily life. Christians are too often inclined to put their faith in a rather tight compartment and their daily actions in another. It is not so with the Hindu or the Muslim. His religious tenets influence every concept of his life, conduct, and motivation.

Christians Face Difficulties

This close tie between Hinduism and daily life is one of the reasons why it is not easy to become a Christian in India. It means a break from caste and custom. This involves such a cultural shock that only the most dedicated and conscientious inquirers can summon the courage to take the final step. It is difficult for us who live in a culture which is already predominantly Christian to realize what a break is involved when a man or woman in India becomes a Christian. The material benefits are few and small. Often the new Christian is ostracized or excommunicated by his family.

At times he is compelled to take up his residence in another village or city and to make his life and home among a different clan. Girls from non-Christian families are often forbidden to marry Christians of their choice under threat of being excluded from their own household. To break caste is to bring disgrace of the most serious order to one's kindred. For this reason the Christian community faces the danger of becoming too ingrown and interdependent in its own social and community relationships.

[3] Clarence G. Vichert, "Out of India and into China," in *Missions,* Vol. 150, No. 3, March, 1952, p. 148.

One of the things the government fears, and of which Christians have been accused with some justification, is the development of an exclusive community with an alien outlook. Yet, in some measure, that is what the teachings of Christianity require of a small minority which might otherwise lose its identity in a non-Christian society.

Many Indian Christians are just as eager as Hindus to preserve the rich cultural heritage of India. Indian leaders feel that the work of the Christian church must not appear to be something entirely foreign and western. This consideration has led to a restudy of church building, liturgy and worship, and methods of church organization to develop forms which commend themselves to Indian leaders and help the church to take its rightful place in the Indian community without losing its distinctive message. Some of the recently built churches, adapted to the materials and architecture of the area, are examples.

Attitudes are changing even in India as the world grows smaller through improved communication and transportation. The new Christians in a predominantly Hindu culture continue to need the understanding and prayers of churches in America where Christians are in the majority, not the minority.

A Great Christian Who Broke Caste

One of the best legacies left by the early missionaries in India was the encouragement of education. Decades ago the missionary usually was the best educated man or woman in the Indian community, other, perhaps, than the government officials. But that has changed. Thousands of Indians now have degrees from the great universities of England, Europe, and America. These men and women have made significant contributions in every walk of life—education, the ministry, medicine, the law, science, commerce, and industry.

These achievements have enriched not only India. Talented, towering figures of India have contributed to the life of the whole world. The story of Yellapragada Subbarow is illustrative of the contribution in hundreds of fields by Indian teachers, authors,

scientists, engineers, doctors, religious leaders, students, and philosophers.

Born in Madras in 1896, young Subbarow had an older brother who was a constant companion. When the devastating disease of sprue swept India the older brother died. A member of a high-caste Brahman family, Yellapragada determined to become an ascetic priest. About this time he met a missionary who quietly suggested: "This is no time to withdraw from life. Why do you not think of the greatest thing you could do and dedicate your talents to God and man?"[4] Taking this advice, the boy decided that he wanted to find a cure for sprue. He graduated from the University of Madras as a medical doctor. He obtained a scholarship at London University where he received another degree in tropical medicine. Then he earned further scholastic awards which brought him to Harvard University where he obtained a Ph.D. in chemistry. After serving for fifteen years on the noted Harvard Medical School faculty he became director of the multimillion dollar Lederle Laboratories in Pearl River, New York. Here 300 scientists worked under his direction to make some of the modern drugs which are so effectively used in disease control. He discovered teropterin, a cancer palliative. He headed the research that produced the miracle drug aureomycin. The New York *Herald Tribune's* account of his death said, "He was one of the greatest medical research scientists of the century." Scientists from all over the world attended his funeral. Some said that in ten more years he would have had an answer to cancer.

This quiet, humble man was a member of the First Baptist Church of Ridgewood, New Jersey. His pastor wrote: "He gave away all the money he had. Often I sent on his checks for world relief. He paid for the education of many young people going into medicine or the ministry. . . . Because of him, tropical sprue has been conquered. . . . His philosophy was 'I was born with nothing. I shall die with nothing.' " He bore the marks of a great man.

[4] Gordon M. Torgersen, *A Ten-Talent Christian from India; The Story of Yellapragada Subbarow* (pamphlet). Valley Forge: The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1952.

The story of Dr. Subbarow's life has a direct relationship to vanishing guideposts and new trails. We have been accustomed over a century and a half to think of the missionaries from the West as the principal representatives of the church in Asia. But without as well as within the church, the situation has changed. There is an increasing group of fine, talented Indian leaders in all fields of endeavor. Consequently the Indian people are weighing more carefully with each passing year the number of missionaries who will be admitted and what their qualifications must be.

The Visa Problem

Missionaries are still needed in India and are eagerly requested by the Christian community. Yet the present attitude of the Indian Government, which has refused a considerable number of Protestant missionary applications for visas, must be understood. In common with the policy of all independent sovereign governments, including the United States, India reserves the right to decide to whom she will grant visas. She is particularly desirous that Indians who have the training and capacity shall occupy the positions of leadership in the fields of education, religion, industry, and medicine.

One of the questions asked on each visa application is whether it is possible to fill the position with an Indian. It therefore becomes clear that those for whom clearance will be granted must usually have some special qualifications or training. They must also be able to make a contribution which an Indian leader with the same educational qualifications is not able to make. This explains one of the reasons why in recent years the mission boards have placed an increasing emphasis on specialized training over and beyond the usual college and seminary requirements. This is an area of deep sensitivity in which the nationalistic sentiments of Indians can be involved quite easily. Moreover, in many parts of India the Hindu organizations are powerful, and, if not actively hostile, look with general disapproval on the admittance of religious workers who may accent what is, by their definition, proselytism and a communal problem.

The New Missionary

The question might then be asked: If a limited number of missionaries only is to be admitted, what type and kind should they be? Indian churchmen, meeting under the auspices of the National Christian Council of India, have made numerous pronouncements on this subject. They urge the mission boards to use a high degree of selectivity, appointing only those most thoroughly trained and most completely dedicated. They must be well grounded in Christian faith and prepared for the encounter with Hinduism, not only in its older forms, but in the newer revolutionary interpretation of its dogma. They emphasize that there must be a willingness to work under the full direction of the national church and its field organization. They suggest that a much-desired asset is a readiness to keep an open mind on the lessening of denominational emphases and a broadening of the sense of the unity of the church. Indian leaders no longer think of the missionary as the administrator, or the director of work and program. Rather, he is a spiritual comrade and partner. He contributes on an equal basis but with a willingness to take a servant-of-a-servant status if that is what is necessary. In these National Christian Council reports there is a strong emphasis on the primacy of missionary motivation and concern for Indian people, even above technical skills. From this brief review it will be seen that the strong, independent nationalistic feeling in India has permeated deeply into the life of the Indian churches and has affected the appointment of missionaries. Consequently, new trails of missionary appointment and service are being blazed.

Administrative Autonomy

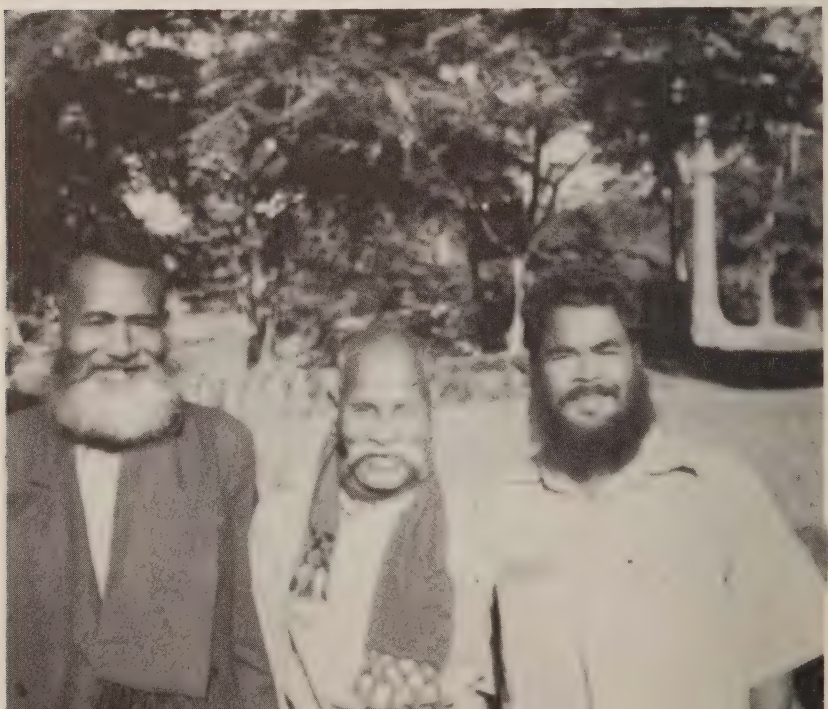
There are at least two other areas in which the boards were aware that changes in missionary procedures would be required even before World War II and the independence of India in 1947. More than three decades ago this realization caused the boards to begin to lay the groundwork for the transfer both of administrative responsibility and of property to Indian leadership. National administrative organizations which have a high degree of inde-

pendence and autonomy in all fields of church life are now functioning actively and well in the three mission areas. The Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI) is an excellent example. At first it was called the Council of Baptist Churches of Assam. However, Manipur is a separate state; and on August 1, 1960, the Indian Government announced that Nagaland would become India's sixteenth state. The name of the Council was then broadened to "North East India," to be inclusive of these frontier states.

Delegates to the Council, including missionaries, are appointed from the Indian churches and associations. Missionaries become members of the Executive Committee or other committees only as they are elected from the total membership of the Council. The Secretary is an Indian of Nepali background, the Rev. Edward Singha. A man in his middle forties, he has a lovely wife, Sushila, who took nurse's training in one of the Assam mission hospitals.

Three pastors, Garo Hills, Assam.

Photo by M. D. Farnum



Mr. Singha received his B.A. degree from Cotton College in Gauhati. During the war he was active in Y.M.C.A. work with the troops in India. He gained experience in evangelistic work in Kamrup District in Assam, of which Gauhati is government headquarters. He then became a student worker in Gauhati where students from all over Assam attend the several colleges. Later, for two years he served as Promotional Secretary for the Council. Mr. Singha was a guest of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society at the Overseas Planning Consultation at Green Lake in 1957. The American Baptist family then had an opportunity to become acquainted with his fine personality, Christian faith, and potentials for leadership. A missionary colleague of Mr. Singha writes about him:

> The spirit of independence and confidence which he imbibed during the days of the Congress Party's struggle for Indian freedom has remained with Eddie to make him a strong and clear-thinking leader of the indigenous church. On the other hand he has demonstrated no narrow nationalism or bitterness, and has always given credit to the contribution which Christian missions has made in that area. His sweet spirit and Christlike manner are a joy to all who know him, and he has the trust and respect of all. For him being a Christian is serious business—a life to be lived.[5]

Other Administrative Structures

It is extremely interesting that in the Bengal-Orissa Mission, as in each of the three areas in India historically related to American Baptists, the developments toward administrative autonomy have proceeded somewhat along the historical patterns of earlier mission administration. Following the tradition of the New England Free Will Baptist founders, this mission has adopted the plan of holding "quarterly" and "yearly" meetings of the town-meeting type. Therefore, when the new national administrative organization in Bengal-Orissa was formed, it followed the familiar pattern established much earlier by Free Will Baptists. Appropriately it is called The Christian Service Society of the Bengal-Orissa Baptist Yearly Meeting.

[5] From a personal letter to the author.

The secretary of this society for the first twelve years was the Rev. R. K. Sahu, who spent most of his early life in the educational program of the mission. He is now retired, but continues to do effective translation and literature work. The new secretary, the Rev. Sushil Bepari, a visitor to the churches in the United States of America following the Baptist World Alliance meetings in Rio de Janeiro in 1960, exhibits both outstanding executive ability and thorough Christian dedication. The organizational problems are complex, the number of church members is small, and the vast majority of these are exceedingly poor. Mr. Bepari is faced with a difficult task and needs our fervent prayers.

Partly because of certain problems occasioned by caste differences, the third area, South India, has been somewhat slower in arriving at its final plan for administration. For many years the administrative body in the South India Mission was a Joint Council, so called because on it both missionaries and Indians were represented. It was composed of eleven Indians and seven missionaries. But the climate of independence and the growth of ability of Indian leaders were such that it seemed wise to place larger responsibility on Indian nationals. In January, 1962, after some years of negotiation, the Convention reorganization was voted. It provides for a Samavesam (Convention) with a smaller General Council which will be charged with general administration and the appointment of a secretary. It is interesting that these significant actions were taken at just about the time the Telugu Mission was celebrating its 125th anniversary.

The mission boards in America have made every effort to keep in step with the times in all three missions. More importantly, they were laying the groundwork for local autonomy in church affairs in all three India areas long before the close of World War II, when the political crisis broke.

Property Transfers

Another area in which there has been a particular sensitivity on the part of some of the Indian leaders is the transfer of property. The boards' policy concerning this was first outlined in 1928

when the independence movement was in its early stages. The policy was revised and reaffirmed immediately following World War II, in 1947. It provides: "It is the policy of the boards that the ownership of church, school and hospital buildings erected on the mission fields with funds appropriated in whole or in part by the boards shall ultimately be transferred to a holding body representing the indigenous Christian community of the entire mission area on conditions mutually agreed upon as respect time of transfer, safeguards as to future use and reimbursement for funds invested." It then goes on to enumerate certain safeguards and details.

It can readily be seen that the objective of the mission boards in this direction is of long standing. Unfortunately there have been many complications to delay the practice of these carefully framed principles. In some instances the Indian Christians have not felt that they were ready to assume the heavy financial burden for the care and upkeep of the property involved. Indian Government tax regulations on property transfers which frequently require the payment of heavy fees have posed a serious problem in other cases. In still other situations the Indian laws pertaining to mission organizations have not been clear and there has been a delay for necessary legal clarification and interpretation. However, sentiments have crystallized on the fields, and the boards have reiterated their desire for an early implementation of these policies. Furthermore, it becomes increasingly clear that a mission body will find the holding of substantial property in an overseas field a liability rather than an asset. It is therefore greatly desired that the organization of property-holding bodies of unquestioned responsibility and fully representative of the Christian constituency be consummated as soon as possible. Then the transfer of property can proceed in an orderly fashion, with clear provision that the property is for the use of Indian churches and related institutions.

While the actual transfer in the ownership of properties to Indian holding bodies has not yet taken place to any large extent, recommendations for use, sale, rentals, and transfers of property,

and for new projects involving the use of property have for many years been coming through the field organizations. Such actions are directly related to field needs and programs. The one general exception thus far in India has been in the use of mission residences.

Cooperation for More Than a Century

Another area in which the revolution in India has produced a great deal of thinking is that of church cooperation and church union. This is another relatively unblazed trail, even though the concept of cooperation among denominations has existed ever since William Carey and Adoniram Judson first undertook their tasks and welcomed the participation of all those interested in the "salvation of heathen." One of the first of general missionary conferences in India was held in 1825. The records lead one to surmise that as early as this there were some Indian Christian participants, even though they might have been only advisers.

William Carey's idea of meetings every ten years really did not come into fruition until 1872 when the first India-wide conference of missionaries of all denominations was held in Allahabad. The fourth Decennial Conference, in 1902, included Indian leaders, missionaries, and mission administrators. It listed fifty-five missions from all over the world as participating. Burma had a delegation of fifteen present.

In 1923 the National Christian Council of India, Ceylon, and Burma was organized "to help coordinate the work of the various missions, to act on behalf of the cooperating missions in negotiations with government and to afford a meeting point for the mission groups to discuss mutual problems." The Christian Council has been a most useful agency. It has grown until it has several departments and a number of state councils. In 1949 Ceylon and Burma, formerly a part of the India Council, set up their own separate Christian Councils. Pakistan also has its own Christian Council. These important agencies of cooperation are affiliated with what was the International Missionary Council but is now the Division of World Mission and Evangelism

of the World Council of Churches, and they continue to render a most effective service in coordinating the activities of widely diverse missionary interests. The prestige and influence of the National Christian Council of India has been of inestimable value in mission relations with government on matters of missionary visas, property, policy, and activities.

Church Union a Live Issue

There are strong segments in the life of the Indian churches which do not feel that cooperation goes far enough. They reason that the denominational differences which exist in America and Europe should not be perpetuated in Indian life. Further, they argue that the Indian Christian constituency is so small in the midst of a large non-Christian population that overwhelming national problems such as caste, poverty, and illiteracy require a visible unity as well as cooperation.

Extended discussions looking toward church union have been held over the past four decades in both South and North India. As early as 1919 at the village of Tranquebar, south of Madras, some fifty missionaries and ministers gathered and made preliminary recommendations regarding church union.[6] The negotiations gradually included other denominational groups and the prolonged discussion encompassed many knotty ecclesiastical and organizational problems.[7]

Finally, on September 27, 1947, the union of three previously independent groups, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Episcopal, involving more than a million members, took place. Subsequently this newly formed group, called the Church of South India, invited other groups, notably Baptist, Methodist, and Lutheran, which cooperate in the state councils, to join the Union. All three denominations have sent observers to several meetings and have been participants in some worthwhile "conversations." Churches related to British but not American Methodists are now

[6] See *Time*, October 13, 1947.
[7] *Proposed Scheme of Church Union in South India.* Madras: Christian Literature Society for India, 1947.

in the Union. The Lutherans have been concerned fundamentally with what they regard as an unsatisfactory doctrinal statement. The primary obstacles for Baptists have been the tenet of believers' baptism, the Baptist concept of ordination and the ministry, and the type of church organization. Baptists have had an opportunity to state their positions in a cordial and mutually helpful atmosphere. There seems to be general agreement that Baptists should continue to exchange views and keep an open mind on future developments.

Only the Christian Service Society of the Bengal-Orissa Bihar Baptist Convention has sent observers to the discussions of the proposed North India Union. Until the present, those in the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India have felt that they were too far removed for such a union to be helpful to them or for them to contribute to it satisfactorily. In 1924 the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches in the central and northern parts of the country came together to form the United Church of North India. Prior to 1929 these groups sent out invitations to several other churches and missions. Negotiations continued until 1957. In that year the third revised edition of a plan of union was submitted to seven negotiating bodies, among which were the churches associated with the British Baptists.[8] It is interesting that after much discussion on such matters as ordination and believers' baptism British Baptists have indicated their willingness to consider such a union and have at the same time filed an official statement outlining certain reservations.

A British Baptist, the Rev. E. L. Wenger, a staff member at Serampore College, is the Convener of the Delegation of Churches associated with the Baptist Missionary Society of England. After stating Baptist concerns he sums up the situation neatly in the following paragraph:

> The present negotiations are significant. The group of Baptists involved is small but they are experimenting. The attitude of 20 million communicant Baptists throughout the world may be affected by the experiment, as well as the attitude of millions of others who,

[8] *Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan.* Madras: Published for Negotiating Committee by Christian Literature Society of India, 1957.

under other names, practice believers' baptism. If it appears that Baptists are absorbed into a church with only permissive right to practice their quaint customs but unable to contribute effectively the insights which were discovered and held at great cost, then other Baptist groups will take warning. But if the entry of Baptists into Church Union is a demonstration of the blending of Christian unity with Christian freedom, we may hope that other Baptist groups will be encouraged to make the same venture of faith.[9]

It may thus be seen that in this revolutionary India the desire of some of the Christian Indian leaders for church union is becoming increasingly insistent. New trails of deep concern to the thinking of future generations of American Baptists are being blazed.

New Trails of Fellowship

There is another recent development among the churches of Asia which has commanded wide interest among Christians in India and America and is tending to shift somewhat the pattern of historic administrative relationships. This is the formation and development of the East Asia Christian Conference. Its creation was a fruit of the realization by the churches in Asia that they are reaching maturity and that they are members of one body in Christ and need each other. The members of this new Conference are the Asian churches in the World Council of Churches and those in the newly created Division of World Mission and Evangelism, (formerly the International Missionary Council). The idea of such an Asia Conference had its beginnings in some of the discussions of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, India, just prior to World War II, in 1938. There, it was becoming increasingly evident that the Asian churches were ready to assume new relationships and powers. Subsequent informal meetings of interested churches and mission leaders in Hong Kong and Bangkok following World War II moved the idea forward.

At first it was felt that the most urgent need was for a staff member of the International Missionary Council or the World

[9] E. L. Wenger, "A Baptist View on Church Union," in *Church Union* [Organ of Negotiating Committee], Vol. I, No. 1, February, 1956, p. 5.

Photo by J. R. Wilson

Sunday morning worship under banyan trees.

Council to be located in Asia to visit the churches and to be available for conference on delicate and involved problems. The capable Rajah Manikam, later Bishop Manikam, of India, was chosen for this post. He performed his duties so effectually in the wake of the rising tide of nationalism that by 1956 there was a growing demand for a more tangible vehicle of fellowship, cooperation, and common witness. This concern was climaxed in an ecumenical meeting at Prapat in Sumatra, Indonesia, early in 1957, when the East Asia Christian Conference was constituted. Through fellowship in this recently created organization the Asian churches have begun to think of their task in regional and world terms for the first time.

It was proposed from the beginning that the secretariat should be kept at a minimum. A Baptist from Burma, U Gyaw Than, is a member of the secretarial staff. The Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference convenes every four years and a continuation committee of one member from each nation meets once a year. Most of the work is handled by committees representing special concerns such as the one on Inter-Church Aid. Much of the work of these committees is done by correspondence to keep costs at reasonable levels. The travel and salary budget of the secretariat is provided by agreement with the World Council of Churches and its Division of Mission and Evangelism. The churches themselves are now contributing $8000 (U.S.) toward administration and meetings. From the first it was determined that at least twenty-five per cent of the program budget should come directly from the churches in Asia.

The churches had known little about each other prior to World War II. Their relationships had been almost entirely with their counterparts in the West. The East Asia Christian Conference now brings them into fellowship with each other. What is most important, the Asian churches have generally regarded this new organization and their freedom in it as a further step to "adulthood." Participation is not based on mother and daughter church relationships, but on mutual recognition of equality with the churches in the West. The churches of Asia are also finding that they exist not just for themselves but to be the salt or leaven in all areas of witness in Asia. They are being challenged to care for one another. In 1958 when there was a shortage of rice in Indonesia, Christians in nine Asian countries responded by sending rice. The Burma Baptist Convention was one of the first to send help in the crisis. Assistance was given to Japan in 1959 when the city of Nagoya was practically destroyed by typhoon Vera.

Primarily the Asian churches have been preoccupied with evangelism. The East Asian Christian Conference has provided the instrument by which national workers of Asian countries can be exchanged between areas. Teams and church organizations of one area have furnished a sponsorship for sending representatives to visit other fields. It is estimated that more than 200 representatives of the member churches of Asia are serving as missionaries or fraternal workers to other areas. For example, there are Filipino workers in Thailand and Indonesia; there are Japanese in India and Okinawa; there are Koreans in Pakistan. The list could be multiplied. Many interesting experiments have taken place, such as exchange of students between Asian colleges, the development of ecumenical work camps, and the exchange of teams for evangelism, for lay training, and for theological conferences.

These and other changes make clear that the pattern of mission work of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century is giving way to bold new experiments. The old guideposts are gone. New trails in administration, program, fellowship, and home board relationships to the field churches are being blazed.

6

Shall American Baptists Quit India?

"Shall We Quit India?" was the provoking title of an article in *Missions,* written by Randolph L. Howard, then Foreign Secretary for the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. This was early in 1947, only a few months before Indian independence. Dr. Howard had just returned from an administrative visit. He reported that at every white face there was flung "a summons, a command, a directive, a demand, and indeed a simple everyday slogan, 'Quit India!' "[1] It should be clear that these catchwords were not directed particularly to missionaries but to all Caucasians. At the same moment Dr. Howard had before him a pile of eleven petitions from Baptist groups, each of which underscored the need for more missionaries!

Quit India?

Sixteen years have gone by. The cries "Quit India!" are not as strident or vociferous. Yet, there are still some quarters where nationalism is strong and where these cries, though muffled, remain real. In spite of this, almost every representative field convention passes resolutions each year asking for more missionaries *of the right type.* The situation persists in which Christian missionaries are welcomed by some and opposed by others. But has this not always been an element in the history of Christian missions? Ever since Paul's trip to the far frontiers of his world, the church has

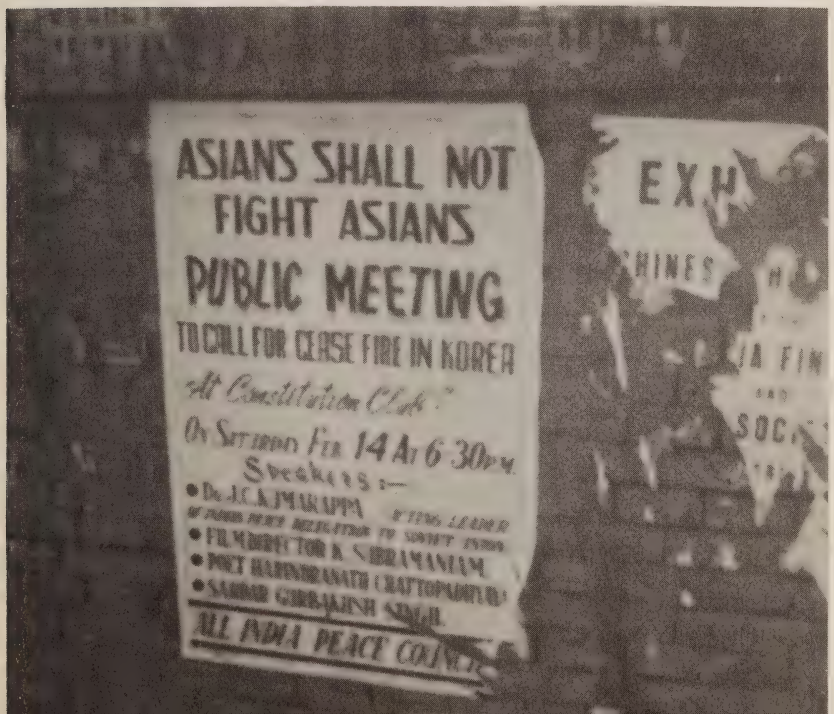
[1] Randolph L. Howard, "Shall We Quit India?" in *Missions,* Vol. 38, No. 5. Valley Forge: American Baptist Convention, May, 1947, p. 268.

pressed forward against obstacles of many types. The noted Christian historian, Kenneth Scott Latourette, of Yale Divinity School, has pointed out on many occasions that Christianity has always been a movement of the minority.

Quit India? How unfortunate for the Christian cause in Asia it would have been if all missionaries had been withdrawn under the pressures of sixteen years ago! To be sure, there have indeed been frustrations, defeats, and disappointments during these years, but, more important, there have been substantial victories. There have been expanding opportunities to come into a closer fellowship with Indian Christian leaders. The opposition and obstacles have afforded an incentive to try new methods and programs, and break through barriers which were built up in the colonial regime. It will be the purpose of this chapter to highlight a few of the Baptist personalities and projects that are helping

Photo by M. D. Farnum

Poster at New Delhi showing nationalistic sentiment.



to weave the fabric of modern Indian life and are illustrative of the way the gospel is meeting changing times in India.

Women in the New India

Without doubt one of the bold new concepts brought to India by Christian forces is the transformation of the traditional attitude toward women and their place in society. The practices of infanticide, child marriage, burning of widows, degradation of girls in the temple worship, and the seclusion of women in the home have been a part of India's past. Most of these practices are now forbidden by laws, and others are breaking down under the pressure of public opinion. V. E. Devadutt, distinguished Baptist from India, formerly on the faculty of Serampore College and now professor at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, points out that the first Indian women to enter the three professions of utmost importance for any nation—teaching, midwifery, and nursing—were Christian women. He goes on to say, "The Bible woman will probably never be mentioned in Indian history. . . . Who can assess the results of teaching which was taken right into the heart of Indian homes—a message which proclaimed that in Christ Jesus each person, whether man or woman, was so precious to God as an individual that God gave Himself up in Christ to show His love and concern for all mankind?"[2]

Today schools and colleges in India are open to capable and qualified women and coeducation is becoming common. Women hold all types of professional positions. They have attained high rank in India's city, state, and national governments. They have served with distinction as city mayors, cabinet ministers, and representatives to the United Nations. Women of dedication and talent are attaining active positions of leadership in the social reforms sweeping India today. By no means can Christian missions claim all the credit for this revolutionary change, but the quiet, persistent preaching of the Christian gospel with its message of respect for every person, man or woman, has penetrated deep

[2] V. E. Devadutt, *Pioneering in Revolution.* (Pamphlet.) Valley Forge: Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1955.

into Indian life. The customs of the years are giving way to the pressures of a new social order. Yet, lest our satisfactions blind us, we must take into account that eighty-five per cent of the women of India remain illiterate. There is still an average of only one nurse for every fifty patients in the hospitals. Those men and women who have accepted Christ as Savior are only about two per cent of the total population.

If there were to be a roll call of all the noble Christian women, past and present, who have left a profound imprint on the life of India, where should one start and end? Would one begin by telling of some of the noble women now gone, like Chundra Lela of Bengal Orissa? A disgraced widow at nine, she visited countless temples in an effort to gain merit. Finally she found Christ, and with a flaming, evangelistic spirit she influenced hundreds of lives. When she became old and rheumatic, and her traveling days were ended, she could say: "If you build me a house, build it on the side of the road so that when I can no longer walk I can crawl to the door and preach to the multitudes passing by." Chundra Lela has had many counterparts in all three India areas.

Women Writing Christian History

The number of noted Christian women who are now contributing to the life of schools, hospitals, churches, and social welfare programs in the India fields are legion. It is to be regretted that only a few, illustrating different types of service, can be mentioned. The life story of that remarkable woman, Mrs. Angnal Anal, a member of the Kom tribe of Manipur State in Assam, better known by her friends as Mrs. Akim, portrays some of the problems on the frontiers of evangelism. Because she studied nursing for a time at the Gauhati hospital, those in need of a nurse or midwife still call upon her in an area where hospital facilities are extremely limited. The Manipur Woman's Baptist Convention was formed under her leadership in 1955. She secured property and started and supervised the first orphanage in Manipur. She has served on the provincial social welfare board

and has been on the Executive Committee of the Council of Baptist Churches of North East India. In all of this she has not neglected the care of her own family.

Miss Ethel Theray is a remarkably capable nurse supervisor at the Nellore hospital in South India. Miss Theray tells of her grandmother being married at the age of ten into a Hindu family which had the cobra, king of snakes, as the household god. Her grandmother had already become a Christian when she was nine years old, under the influence of the American Baptist missionary, Dr. David Downie, who was later to write an informative resource book on the India of his day.[3] While washing the household god the grandmother as a little girl stood with hands clasped in prayer and "in heart she worshiped the true God, and when she looked at the god before her, she saw not the image but her own conception of the face of Jesus." Later the grandmother became a widow, free to testify to her faith. All of her children were ultimately baptized into the Lone Star Baptist Church. Miss Theray, Christian nurse in South India, is one of the grandchildren. What Christians in India owe to that intrepid child wife![4]

Or should we mention Miss Suddha Mookerji, of Bengal? She is now head of the secondary school at Midnapore with some 700 girls in attendance. Under her leadership this institution has the highest government rating of any school among the three and a half million people of the district. With the same appreciation we must recall Miss Anondi Kenwar, of Assam, who served as headmistress of the Mission Girls' Training School in Assam. Miss Kenwar's contribution as a Christian will be recognized by the fact that she was the first woman to be elected President of the Council of Baptist Churches of North East India. Also she heads the Literature Committee of both the Council of North East India and the Assam Christian Council. And when we think of women with status who are in service, there are vivacious, petite

[3] See David Downie, *The Lone Star.* Valley Forge: The American Baptist Publication Society, second edition, 1924.

[4] Ethel Theray, "Finding the Living, Healing Christ," in *Missions,* Vol. 151, No. 4. Valley Forge: The American Baptist Convention, April, 1953, p. 41.

Ethel Theray, supervisor of nursing, Nellore Hospital.

Susan Mathew, the first secretary of the Youth Committee of the Telugu Baptist Church in South India, and Dr. Alice Mark, a Baptist, the first woman doctor in Assam.

Miss Alice Rathnam Veeraswamy, (Rathnam means jewel) is now approaching retirement after a lifetime of service and leadership as headmistress at Nellore High School in South India. Some years ago, when visiting the United States, she gave a description of the delicate lotus flower with its roots deep in the filth, silt, and debris at the bottom of a lake, but thrusting its broad leaves out on the surface of the water and presenting to the world only the most fragile and beautiful of blossoms. With this analogy she described the Christian life rising above untoward circumstance, sin, and ignorance, and blooming in the sunlight of God's love. Miss Veeraswamy's father was orphaned in the great famine of 1876-78. For thirty-five years he had been employed in a humble capacity by Dr. Downie. Alice grew up on the mission compound, was head of her high school class, graduated from Woman's Christian College, Madras, and received further training in America. She was elected corresponding secretary of the influential Telugu Baptist Woman's Convention. In her later years she has developed a serious difficulty with her back. After months of surgery and treatment at the famed Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital she came home in an alkathene shell which covered her body from neck to limbs. She has recovered sufficiently to be out of the shell part of the time. Her faith has never wavered. In one of her darkest moments she was able

to write, "I will not die [just now] but live [a while longer] and declare His works!"

Quit India? These are our comrades and sisters in the faith. But, like the author of the Book of Hebrews, we must ask: "And what more shall I say? For time would fail me . . ." to tell of the unsung women of the last 125 years, who through sacrifice and toil have helped build the church in India.

The Church Faces Industrial Change

India's industrial change partially grew out of the work of the missionaries, whose concept of universal education for leadership opened a new era. To be sure, before India's independence the British administration took a primary interest in the development of a university system for the training of civil servants and professional leaders. But it was the missionaries, with a program partly supported by government grants, who were the pioneers in village and rural education, and who laid the groundwork for high school and college training for a larger percentage of the population. Consequently agricultural and vocational training have become a part of the program in South India and Bengal-Orissa.

A good illustration of a training which meets life situations is offered by the Technical School at Balasore in Orissa. One of the heavy prices often paid by Hindus who become followers of Jesus Christ is the loss of their former means of livelihood because of their change in caste status. Both trade and commercial subjects are given at Balasore, one of the finest institutions for industrial and commercial training on any American Baptist field. This school furnishes skilled technical workers not only to the Baptists in Bengal-Orissa, but to other missions in Bihar and East Pakistan. The National Christian Council of India has thought so highly of the program that it has offered substantial scholarships to worthy applicants. A survey completed recently indicates that more than sixty per cent of the graduates reporting were Christian and eighteen per cent of these were in full time Christian work. The commerce department courses have been enlarged to meet the demands of modern India.

Missionary Wm. C. Osgood of Bengal-Orissa in his annual report for 1961 heads one paragraph: "The Church Faces Industrial Change." He points out that with the beginning of the third Five-Year period of the Indian government program the tempo of industrialization is being speeded up. Major ports are being developed; bridges are being built across rivers never before spanned; railway lines are being electrified and double-tracked; and national highways are being built and improved. New industries are developing. Near the great steel and mining center of Jamshedpur where the largest steel plant in Asia is located it is expected that 40,000 new workmen will be employed.[5] "Will Christians be among the leaders in these fields of industrial and technological change?" is a pertinent question.

Baptists Help Found Colleges

The Christian Church has always been a leader in the field of higher education. Two American Baptist women, Mrs. Lucy Peabody and Mrs. Helen Barrett Montgomery, were pioneers in helping to establish world-renowned colleges for women in India, including Madras Women's Christian College and St. Christopher's Training College, both founded early in this century.

The dream of a Christian College was in the minds of Assam missionaries for decades, but for many years money and personnel did not seem sufficient. In the meanwhile the interest of the Assam Christian Council, representing the cooperative mission societies working in Assam, was enlisted. Finally on August 16, 1952, a college, (if such it could be called then) was opened at Barapani near Shillong, the capital of Assam. Seven of the eleven students enrolled in the first class were Baptists. The campus where they began their work consisted of a thousand acres beautifully situated in the hills, donated by local authorities. An ecumenical, international work camp, which included two students from Burma and three from Japan, helped to put up the buildings of mud-plastered bamboo with thatch roof and dirt floors. These

[5] See "Bengal-Orissa" in *Annual Report of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Societies: Along Kingdom Highways.* Valley Forge: A.B.F.M.S. and W.A.B.F.M.S., 1962.

were the first dormitories and class rooms! Now, after ten years, there is an enrollment of 100 students. Under the guidance of a dedicated British missionary, Dr. H. J. Taylor, new buildings are under construction and a creative leadership is being given to this institution. Already this college is providing better-trained personnel for the Christian community.

In this venture Baptists have had a significant part. An American Baptist missionary helped to supervise construction and initiated the agricultural course. Both missionaries and nationals of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India have served on the board of trustees. American Baptist money helped construct the boys' dormitory and annual grants are made to the recurring budget.

For a Better-Trained Ministry

Approximately fifteen miles north of Calcutta is the theological college at Serampore, whose history goes back to William Carey, its founder. The members of the faculty are internationally recognized for their accomplishments. It is the only theological college in India which is authorized by the government to grant degrees, and therefore other theological institutions of high educational attainments are affiliated with it. Because American Baptists have for many years maintained an intense interest in theological training on a high level, missionaries in Bengal, Orissa, and Assam have been elected to serve on the Serampore Council and Senate. Many of the most capable Baptist leaders in all parts of India have had their basic theological work in this foremost educational institution. It is a theological college where cooperation has proved effective for all participants.

The policy of American Baptists has been to cooperate with other boards in higher level training programs whenever possible. Where this has not proved to be feasible it has been necessary to set up Baptist institutions for theological training. In the Bengal-Orissa Mission, for example, the Christian Service Society cooperates with the British Baptist Theological College in Cuttack. In South India, American Baptists also make small annual grants

and contribute a faculty member to Andhra Christian College. This is a liberal arts college rather than a seminary and is a Lutheran institution in tradition and background. American Baptists maintain off-campus activities for Baptist students enrolled at the college with an active student center program and the provision of the Bullard and Carey hostels. On the other hand, American Baptists are among the principal sponsors of Eastern Theological College at Jorhat, Assam. It provides general basic training and offers courses which fit students for advanced work at Serampore. Many alumni of Eastern Theological College are active leaders in the rewarding programs of evangelism in the Garo and Naga Hills. A student recently remarked: "I did not know the importance of Eastern Theological College until I attended the annual meeting of the Council of Baptist Churches in Assam and Manipur and saw how much the institution had contributed to Christian leadership in Assam." The enrollment in 1961 was forty-five students, coming from every corner of Assam.

The oldest American Baptist seminary in India is located at Ramapatnam in South India. As early as 1870, only thirty-four years after the founding of the South India Mission, the need for higher theological education was noted. The Mission Conference of that year passed a resolution expressing the strong opinion that a theological seminary should be an immediate goal. In 1874 the Rev. R. R. Williams was designated by the Missionary Union to seminary work.

Now, for almost ninety years, the Ramapatnam seminary has been giving basic leadership training for the ministry in the Telugu country. The chapel, central classrooms, dormitories, and faculty houses are located in a beautiful setting of spreading banyan trees; and the thundering surf of the Bay of Bengal rolls up on the sandy shores only a half mile away. Many distinguished Baptists have served on the faculty. In 1960 Ramapatnam had a faculty of twelve, of whom six were missionaries and six Indian nationals. In the first eighty-seven years of its existence more than eleven hundred men and six hundred women were sent out into the life of India with a Christian witness. Of that number some

five hundred were still active in 1960.[6] This is, indeed, a remarkable record.

Like every other phase of Christian work, the strength of an institution is in proportion to the capabilities of its faculty. At Ramapatnam, most of the Indian faculty members, like the Rev. Bontha Ratham Moses, are well-trained and experienced in church life. Mr. Moses, before coming to his present position in 1957, had experience as a pastor, evangelist, and leader in the Telugu Baptist Convention. For more than six years he was pastor of the important Beswada church. Beyond the local church, he served as promotional secretary for the Telugu Convention, is the author of several books and pamphlets in use among Telugu-Musking people, and has been the secretary of the important Baptist Union of India, Burma, Pakistan, and Ceylon and the acting director of the Union. In 1957, Mr. Moses attended the Overseas Planning Consultation at Green Lake, Wis.

What Day Is Propitious?

American Baptists have given strong leadership in the fields of health, preventive medicine, and nursing. Perhaps no other phase of mission activity better reflects the spirit of compassion of the Master. This important kind of ministry began early in the life of the missions. The anguish of observing people suffer from disease, famine, and cruelty was one of the greatest hardships the early missionaries had to bear, if one is to judge by their letters and writings. Fortunately, enlightened governments and modern miracle drugs are creating a new picture. But the needs of the ill, the underprivileged, and the superstitious continue unabated. A missionary in South India gives this present-day picture of a common event at the Nellore Hospital in South India:

> A wizened grandmother and a restless father squint anxiously at the clock, tense and fearful lest the new baby arrive a few minutes earlier or later than the auspicious time set by the astrologer. A malarial patient shaking with chills, or some asthmatic sufferer, breathless and weak, is brought to the hospital for our opinion, then whisked

[6] See *Life at Ramapatnam* (booklet). Nellore, South India: The Vivehananda Press, 1960.

away to await "a good day" for admission! A little child desperately ill has been branded with a hot iron to drive away the evil spirits. Many such pictures we could show you.[7]

The three major hospitals in Assam have recently adopted a plan of mobile work throughout the entire convention. They have evolved an excellent program of nurses' education. Specialized work is done for tuberculosis and leprosy patients. There is training in midwifery and modern surgical techniques. There are special clinics for such underprivileged minorities as the tea garden migrants.

In Bengal-Orissa plans have been formulated recently for an urgently needed public health ministry through rural clinics. A small hospital is under construction at Nekursini with an Indian doctor in charge. Thus far, appeals to the government for visas for a missionary doctor and nurses have not been successful although they have been earnestly requested by the Baptist church members.

In South India three hospitals and six dispensaries ministered to 10,283 in-patients and 26,055 out-patients in 1960. During the troubled days immediately following independence Dr. Arthur G. Boggs, a member of the Boggs family that has given almost four hundred years to mission service in India, stated the following high aims of medical service in India:

> 1) to emulate the great Christian leaders of the past . . . 2) to emphasize quality rather than volume remembering that the Christian witness demands the best we can give in professional standards and testimony; 3) to take up the challenge of preventive medicine as far as staff and finances permit; 4) to Indianize the management as soon as possible; 5) to cooperate with government and all other agencies of medical service; 6) to maintain the emphasis on the love of God as revealed in Christ.[8]

With these objectives before them, consecrated missionary Christian doctors and nurses are striving to relieve the distress and suffering.

In addition to the medical work carried on under the direct

[7] From a missionary newsletter.

[8] *South India—Light and Shadow* (Paper by an unknown author). Valley Forge: In American Baptist Foreign Mission Society files.

Dr. Alice Mark,
Gauhati Hospital.

Courtesy Vellore Christian Medical College Board

Dr. Jacob Chandy, Vellore.

auspices of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, American Baptists are proud to be one of the fifty-two participating mission boards and other philanthropic agencies in England, Europe, America, and Australia engaged in the medical and teaching program of the Christian Medical College and Hospital at Vellore. Vellore was established in 1918 by the late Dr. Ida S. Scudder of the Woman's Board of the Reformed Church in America, a granddaughter of the first American medical missionary to India. It was the pioneer medical school for women. In 1947, the program of education was expanded to include men. The fame of this institution has spread so far that the highest type of students from all parts of India seek admission.

Highly skilled doctors hold professorships in this college. Among these are outstanding Indian Christians including Dr. J. Chandy, a world-famous neurosurgeon trained in the best medical schools in England and America. Recently he was a guest in the United States and Canada where he read papers to American sur-

geons. Dr. Paul W. Brand, of England, is another. His capable orthopedic surgery has enabled many victims of leprosy to use their hands and feet again. At the present time the Director is Dr. John S. Carman, an American Baptist. Dr. Carol Jameson, of the Woman's Board, served for many years as professor of midwifery and gynecology. Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital is one of the pioneering medical training institutions of India, esteemed by government authorities in India and abroad and by leaders in the fields of medical training and public health alike.

Where Can Missionaries Help?

Some Indian leaders feel that the greatest contribution which mission boards of today can make is the initiation of and support of pioneer and pilot projects in such fields as stewardship, lay-training, and literature which are creative and imaginative. Once these projects become integrated and embedded in the pattern of Indian church life, local leadership and support are able to carry them forward in an increasingly effective way.

Another area of assistance is in the provision of opportunities for the training abroad of Indian Christian leaders. American Baptists have been one of the pioneering denominations in this field. Many Indian leaders have been assisted financially in their study for advanced degrees in England or America. Others have been brought to the United States to become better acquainted with American church life and the Baptist constituency.

The Missionary as Translator and Linguist

It would be impossible to calculate the contribution made to Indian life through Christian schools, hospitals, churches, and other established institutions. Nevertheless, some of the most exciting and fascinating results have been in these areas of more informal Christian activities. By necessity missionaries became experts in language and translation. They not only gave the Bible to the people in the vernacular but they also reduced languages to writing. They taught people to read, and translated some of the world's greatest literature. A good example of what has been

done is given in the recent report of the literature director of the Council of Baptist Churches of North East India. There are now hymnbooks, Scriptures, periodicals, and religious and secular books available to a greater or lesser degree in the following principal languages or dialects in the northeast states of India: Abor, Anal, Garo, Assamese, Mikir, Mundari, and Kuki; and at least fifteen Naga dialects, of which some of the more important are the Angami, Sema, Ao and Tangkhul. In addition to Bible and Gospel translations, books of a general nature range from Aesop's fables, through school texts, pastors' helps, and tracts on such subjects as the way of salvation. When one realizes that many of the same missionaries who have been engaged in the translation of biblical literature have also made widely accepted scientific observations on the life and customs of the people, the flora and fauna of the area, and the significance of Hinduism, Islam, or animism in the life of the people, the list of Christian-oriented literature becomes long indeed.

Toward an Understanding of Ancient Faiths

Why does a Hindu or Muslim think and act as he does? What part does religion play in his daily and national life? The resurgence of and the renewed vitality in such ancient faiths as Hinduism and Islam have led Christian students in India into a deep probing of the philosophy and faith which underlie such resurgence. The National Council of India has been engaged in a most useful and comprehensive study of Hinduism and its manifestations in India. This is an interdenominational project. Baptists have made a contribution to this study by the assignment of an exceptionally well-trained scholar, the Rev. John B. Carman, to the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society at Bangalore. Mr. Carman is the son of the Director of Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital.

In view of the fact that an estimated 40 million Muslims remain in India proper, there are increasing efforts to understand Islam and its place as a faith in the world today. The Henry Martyn School for Islam Studies, now located at Aligarh, was

Photo by M. D. Farnum

The Rev. Gilbert Marak and family.

College Chapel at Vellore.

founded in 1930. The initiative was taken by the British Conference of Foreign Mission Societies and the first principal was the Rev. Bevan Jones, a British Baptist. Its primary function was the training of students, Indian and missionary, for an understanding of Islam and for work among Muslims. A splendid library has been built up and excellent research projects are under way. After India and Pakistan were partitioned, the school no longer took resident students, but instead became an institute, with experienced staff members available for training sessions in churches and seminaries.

The Henry Martyn Institute is a cooperative project supported by a limited number of British, Canadian, and American boards, including American Baptists. The Rev. Ian H. Douglas, an American Baptist, served as director during part of his last term of service in India. He has been elected to a new three-year term as head of the Institute. In a recent letter[9] Mr. Douglas points out that Christian research remains a key responsibility since the partition of India. Since Islam is essentially a state religion in Pakistan, which it cannot be in India, Muslims face many problems. Muslims will have a permanent minority status in predominately Hindu India. Expert knowledge of Islamic literature and teaching may give guidance and illumination on the best Christian approach to these vexed Muslims in India.

[9] From letter to author, July 3, 1962.

Missionaries with Functional Responsibilities

Increasingly during recent years, missionaries have been giving time and effort to programs of benefit to an entire area rather than to a single station. Instead of confining their work to a single compound they are working over wide geographical territories, assisting their Indian colleagues on such basic church problems as evangelism and stewardship of money, time, and talent. The Christian Home and Family Life program is being sponsored through seminars and discussion groups. Such basic issues as preparation for marriage, family living, religion and the home, parenthood, child training, health, and recreation are bringing Christian concepts into Indian family life and boy and girl relationships.[10]

Youth programs and the enlistment of young people in the life of the church are taking a special place of significance; many camp centers are under construction in Baptist areas. Retreats and well-attended youth conferences involving more than one mission area bring into focus the problems of youth in a revolutionary India.

The Baptist Union of India

The Baptist Union of India is representative of most of the larger Baptist bodies working in India. It is a constituent member of the Baptist World Alliance and is primarily a body to promote Baptist fellowship and understanding. An All-India Baptist Youth Conference was sponsored jointly by the Baptist Union of India and the Baptist World Alliance in 1958. This conference brought together Baptist youth from churches historically related to British, Canadian, Swedish, and American Baptists, and resulted in a new sense of fellowship.

Rice as a Tithe

The women's organizations have had a powerful influence in the development of church life in India. It is a moving experience

[10] See *The Christian Family in Changing East Asia.* Manila: The Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, 1954.

to see the women of Assam in tribal dress bringing baskets of rice to the association meetings. They have saved the rice as a tithe, handful by handful, as they have cooked their families' meals throughout the year. More recently laymen's organizations have come into prominence and are becoming increasingly effective. Moreover, there are other informal activities such as the Christian Home Festivals and Institutes sponsored jointly by the National Christian Council of India and the national churches.

New Approaches in Evangelism

There are also pioneer approaches in evangelism. Among the most interesting of these are the Bible correspondence courses in South India, Bengal-Orissa, and Assam. In 1960 at the end of a nine-year period the following impressive statistics were furnished in South India report:

Gospel of John and first two lessons supplied on request	118,555
Students enrolled on completion of lesson two	52,630
Certificate for completion of 24 lessons in John's Gospel	12,723
Certificate for completion of advanced course in Acts	6,004
Certificate for completion of advanced course in Romans	3,275

It is most important that practically all types of work and professions were represented among the students, more than half of

First fruits in church, Balasore.

Photo by M. D. Farnum

Girl with rice offering for church, Garo Hills.

Photo by M. D. Farnum

the enrollees being non-Christian and almost three-quarters of them being less than twenty years of age.

One of the most challenging evangelistic opportunities that has come to American Baptists in the post-independence years has been the response of peoples of the primitive animistic backgrounds in different parts of India. Most of these peoples are located in Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland. Although head hunting and superstitious beliefs persist in some remote places, they are giving way rapidly before Christian teaching and modern education and government. The very fact that there is a sufficiently cohesive leadership of intelligent, educated men and women to seek the status of Nagaland as a separate state in the republic of India is itself an indication of the change taking place.

The Santals of Orissa

In addition to Assam the other Baptist area in India where there are strong and virile aboriginal people is in Bihar and Orissa where the race of Santal peoples live. They number 3 million. They are an agricultural people who seem to drift to wherever work is available. They are economically poor and there is a high degree of illiteracy among them; only a half of one per cent are able to read and write. They are neither Hindus nor Muslims and they have no mosques or temples. Their graves, outside the villages, are sacred. It is here that sacrifices of all types of food and animals, principally goats and chickens, are made to appease the spirits. The rubbish heaps outside the village, piled high with pots, torn mats, brooms, and other primitive household items, are supposed to keep the spirits content and outside the villages. They love singing, dancing, and drumming.

The first Santal church was organized by the Rev. James L. Phillips in 1874.[11] Today the Santal community related to all Christian groups numbers approximately fifty thousand. The opportunity for further expansion and growth is ripe. How long this situation will continue cannot be predicted. The revolutionary

[11] See August A. Berg, *The Santals,* Thesis prepared at Andover Newton Theological School, under Prof. Basil Mathews, 1942.

forces in India are scattering the Santals. Modern materialism is competing keenly for the loyalty of these worthy and intensely interesting people.

In this day when the doors are closed to residence by American missionaries in some of the more remote and strategic sections of India, it gives courage to see how God is placing his hand on local leaders and challenging them to the pioneer tasks of evangelism. Always God seems to move in a mysterious way through his chosen servants. That has been the history of the Christian mission in India. Just as God has raised up noble, consecrated men and women for his tasks, so he has called pioneer evangelists and devoted servants, like Longri Ao and Kijungluba Ao, of Assam.

Longri Ao Becomes a Christian

Longri Ao, on his recent visit to America, told in his enthusiastic way of his boyhood in a heathen village. His father was a priest and hoped his son would follow him. He taught his son many ways in which to protect himself from the evil spirits: how to sacrifice pigs and chickens; how to make powerful medicines; how to tell fortunes by tearing banana leaves and watching the fragments fall; how to cut his hair.

Longri's father and mother became Christians after some friends prayed with them when Longri's sister was critically ill. Longri was sent to mission school at Impur. He became a Christian at the age of fourteen. He entered Jorhat Bible School and, when he finished, went back to his own people as an organizer of youth work.

Longri later was invited to become principal of Jorhat Bible School but he felt the need of more training before undertaking such a task. With the help of the mission he graduated from the Baptist College at Serampore. He was then offered several positions, but he could hear only his own people in the hills continuing to call. In 1951 Longri was commissioned as the first missionary of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India. He went back into the mountains to the town of Wakching, the

government center in the Konyak area. For ten years he has been the only one to take the gospel to these remote villagers. Thus the gospel story is spread by consecrated Indian leaders.

Kijungluba Ao's Statement

Kijungluba Ao is an ordained leader among the Nagas with an uncompromising faith. When asked by an Indian Government official what made the Nagas change from fierce warriors and headhunters to peaceful citizens, Kijungluba pointed to the changes that had come with Christianity. The government official pressed his question:

> "No, no, no! That is not what I mean," objected the officer. "I mean, why did the people listen to them? Was it because of their dollars? or their white skins? or because they were learned?"
>
> Thoughtfully, Kijung answered: "No, it was not their dollars, nor their white skins, nor that they were learned. It was because they were new men in Christ."[12]

The government official then asserted that he would send government workers with missionary zeal and spirit into the remaining areas.

> "Sir," answered the indomitable Kijung, "I'm sorry, but that won't work. It is impossible to work with missionary spirit and zeal without the new heart and the new spirit that only Christ can give."[12]

Quit India? Desert the faithful Christian leaders among the Santals of Orissa, the Garos, the Nagas, and the Manipuris of the hills, the Hindus and Muslims of the plains? The victories achieved in the lives of men and women mentioned in this chapter might not have been won if the word "quit" had been a part of missionary vocabulary in 1947, when the path was so difficult prior to and immediately following independence. Instead, independence in India has opened a whole new chapter of Christian activities which could not have been written under colonial rule. Thank God that American Baptists did not quit India when the road was rough!

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[12] Hazel Morris, "The Leaven of the Gospel," in *Missions*, Vol. 160, No. 6. Valley Forge: The American Baptist Convention, June, 1962, page 16.

7

what of the future?

TWO HUMPED, BROWN BULLOCKS are plodding up and down a steep earthen incline. The scene is in South India and it is at a time between the monsoons. Ropes attached to the wooden yokes of the oxen are guided over large pulleys at the top of the mound of earth. As the bullocks walk away from the deep well, a great leather scoop made of goatskin or pigskin is pulled up. It brings out dark, muddy water to pour into life-carrying irrigation ditches. This crude irrigation device, used for centuries in many places in South India, has helped to stave off famine for many generations and has given extra water to crops during years of drought. It is primitive and inefficient, but the number of lives saved from starvation and thirst cannot be calculated.

BOOM TOWN TODAY

The modern Indian government is taking a new look at these age-old problems of drought and famine. Ninety miles from the thriving city of Hyderabad the gigantic Nagarjunasagar Dam is one of several water-power projects now in process of construction. Begun in 1955, it is only one example of India's determined efforts to better the lot of her peoples. This tallest and largest masonry dam in the world is being built across the historic and legendary Krishna River, the second largest river in peninsular India. It will provide electricity for thousands of families that have traditionally used small pottery lamps with wicks dipped in oil, like those used in Bible times. When the present stage of construction is completed, water will be backed up over an area of nearly seventy-five square miles; and when the final plan is ex-

ecuted, the water will cover a hundred square miles. Close by this development is the Nalgonda District of Andhra Pradesh, in South India, where American Baptists maintain a historic missionary effort. The United States foreign aid program to India, for which American Baptists have had enthusiasm and in which they have had a part through their taxes, has helped to finance this impressive project.

Government publicity material[1] states that no river has a greater number of shrines on its banks. The tenets of the Mahayana school of Buddhism were first expounded and given to the world from a small village about seven miles upstream. The name "Nagarjuna" is believed to be that of an old Buddhist university located on a hill by the same name. "Sagar" means water tank or lake. The excavations have already yielded rich archaeological discoveries which furnish insights into India's ancient history.

The limitless resources of the country's manpower are being used for this tremendous project, because India does not possess unlimited foreign exchange for the purchase of heavy machinery. Some forty thousand unskilled and five thousand skilled and administrative workers are engaged in the task. It is obvious that such a large labor force cannot live in a single colony. In a recent letter, Missionary Albert L. Slater gives a graphic description of developments at the site of the dam.[2] He says that there are three main labor colonies, the Pilon and Hill colonies on the left bank, and the Right Bank settlement. There are also laborers with temporary housing in the valleys, who have to move with the high water in the spring or whenever the lake begins to fill in. The Hill colony is made up largely of engineers and other better-paid technical workers. Pilon and Right Bank colonies are mostly teachers, office workers, and skilled laborers.

The unskilled labor villages are scattered across the valleys and along the banks. In well constructed villages the houses are of stone and have electricity and running water. Amenities are

[1] See Department of Information and Public Relations, *Nagarjunasagar* (pamphlet). Secunderabad: Shivayi Press, December, 1960.

[2] From letter to the author, June 20, 1962.

few here. The government has planned and assigned the houses to their occupants. Therefore Christians are neighbors to all the other groups. Most of the Christians come from Lutheran, Baptist, and Mennonite stations within a radius of 50 miles of the project. Here are employed an estimated three to four thousand Christians.

Under the auspices of the National Christian Council of India in close cooperation with the Andhra State Christian Council, Baptists have joined with Lutherans and Mennonites to give a cooperative witness to Christianity in the three principal labor colonies. In three of the settlements there is now regular worship led by two pastors, one a Baptist, the other a Lutheran. Lutherans and Baptists have each contributed half to the support of the two pastors and to the initial building fund. Negotiations for land for the construction of a Christian Center began over five years ago. The site was granted in 1961, and now a further step can be taken in a ministry to a people enmeshed in the changes in India. This contrast between the ancient system of irrigation and the huge, modern dam is only one of the many paradoxes in India today.

The Tempo of Industrialization Increases

Pressures for change are to be found in all parts of India. With the completion of the First and Second Five-Year government plans and the beginning of the Third, the tempo of industrialization is speeding up. Bengal-Orissa Mission is in the midst of these dislocations, including the conversion from a rural to an industrial society. A major port is under development within thirty miles of the historic Baptist mission center of Khargpur. The railway from Khargpur to Calcutta is to be electrified and much of it will be double-tracked. New railroad marshaling yards on the outskirts of the city are being constructed. An improved and shortened national highway between Bombay and Calcutta is almost finished as is the last major obstacle, the bridge across the Rupnarayan River. Many other road improvements are under way. Traffic through centers where the Christian Service Society of Bengal-Orissa is at work will be greatly increased. New industries are being built along the better highways. Missionary W. C.

Osgood writes: "What developments like these mean in new mission opportunities and responsibilities and the need to build up the churches' ministry to the industrial areas can be readily understood." The opportunities for Christian hostels, Christian centers, and an industrial ministry in this shifting pattern are most favorable for Christianity.

But this is India old and new—the old competing with the new in the process of change and industrialization. The cities are growing at an astonishing rate, thus creating another problem. Although approximately four-fifths of the Indian people still live in villages, India has an urban population of eighty millions out of her four hundred and thirty-eight millions. Housing is extremely expensive and frequently unattainable. Too often, the Indian city is a conglomeration of hovels, where six or eight people sleep in a room, and there is filth and litter in the alleyways. The pathways are crowded with bicycles, cows, and goats because government plans for housing cannot cope with the influx of the increased population. Cultural and recreational activities are almost nonexistent. Sanitary facilities are few, and water spigots are far between. Thousands are the victims of unscrupulous money lenders, who finance marriages, funerals, and other family events at exorbitant interest rates. Like many other parts of the world, every large city in India has its particularly distressing slum areas. The problem is complicated by the high birth rate. India as an independent nation has made substantial progress in famine control and in housing developments. But these fine accomplishments have brought on new and critical social and moral problems as more people flood into the cities.

The Appeal of Communism

Hanging heavily over the demons of poverty, illiteracy, and inadequate housing is the shadow of Communism. This threat poses difficult questions for Christians, because Communist propaganda is based primarily on an appeal to the ignorant, the downtrodden, and the oppressed.

But what is the position of Christians? The Bible has a

great deal to say about social injustices and usury. It also speaks of racial and class hatred and discrimination. As long as people go to bed hungry, have no homes but a hovel or a blanket on the street, are debt-ridden to greedy money lenders, and live on the fringes of society, the Christian church will have a unique message. In the face of Communist blandishments must we not press more vigorously the concern of the Christian for the individual and the environment in which he must live and grow spiritually? Many Indian leaders feel that legislation against Communism can at best be only a temporary expedient. The more permanent deterrent must be in a deep Christian concern for the needy and the downtrodden of the world. "The Gospel for India must be a whole Gospel, social as well as personal."[3]

It is clear that India has wished to walk an independent political course between the philosophies of East and West. Generally speaking, her inclination has been in the direction of negotiation and peaceful adjustment of international differences. Sometimes India seems to sway rather more closely to the philosophy of Russia and China than to that of the Western Powers. It is well to understand the reasons, which lie basically in her geography and in the depths of the economic and social problems with which she is confronted.

The Church in an Indian Environment

It is within this setting of revolutionary changes and conflicting ideologies and emotions that the Christian gospel is preached to caste and outcaste, Muslim and animist. The difficulties inherent in the task are both internal and external. If we believe that Christianity brings a unique message to the people of India, we must accept the fact that there will be problems and frustrations, and sometimes even misunderstandings, difficulties, and conflicts of ideas. One excellent illustration is the divergency of viewpoint between Christianity, a minority faith, and Hinduism, the religion of the majority. Dr. J. W. Grant sums up the differences succinctly and profoundly in the following paragraph:

[3] L. M. Schiff, "The Challenge of Communism in India," in *National Christian Council Review.* Bombay: May, 1952.

> Christianity and Hindu worship differ not only in the details of their practice but in the ends they are meant to serve. Hindu practices at their lowest are techniques of manipulating the gods, at their highest means of fitting the soul for its final destiny of absorption into the infinite. Christian worship means the celebration of God's mighty acts for us and the expectation of God's continual presence with us. Hindu worship seeks to lift man by his boot straps; in Christian worship God comes down to lift us to Himself. Hinduism is one of many religions of nature, addressing its worship in the final analysis to the sum of all existing things. Christianity is the religion of Grace, addressing its worship to God who intervenes to direct the course of nature and history. Hindu worship mobilizes the religious powers inherent in man himself. Christian worship links the believer with the mighty acts God has done on his behalf.[4]

So the small, devoted, consecrated group of Christians in India are caught not only in the revolutionary, social, economic, and political changes but in a religious transference which cuts deeply into the old social and spiritual fabrics of Indian life.

Dangers for the Indian Church

In all this there are acute dangers for Christians and the Indian church. Unless the church is on its guard it may too easily absorb the intermixture of the new materialism and the old practices of India, forgetting that Christianity is a new way of life in Christ. A danger in the opposite direction is that the church, because of its small size and minority status, may be inclined to keep itself aloof from the cultural, social, and economic changes in which the Christian voice should be heard with resounding clarity. Christian influence can help bring wise and just solutions for India's infinitely complex internal and foreign problems. Christian patience, understanding, sympathy, and prayers are sorely needed. India's decisions will be extremely important to Asia and the entire world in the years immediately ahead.

What Do We Need to Know?

What then is the relationship of all this to the program of American Baptists in India in the years just ahead? Several con-

[4] John Webster Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 64. Used by permission.

clusions seem warranted. This is a list of things which we need to know:

1. We need to know the historical backgrounds of the religious, social, and political life that have led to the present situation in India.
2. We need to know that India has a long cultural heritage, and that her leaders and people are proud of it. They are sensitive to thoughtless criticism, especially when it is not well supported by facts.
3. We need to know something of the atmosphere and environment in which our Christian brothers and sisters in India are struggling, working, and living.
4. We need to know the nature of the threats of Communism and materialism and of the resurgence and renewed vitality of the Hindu and Islamic faiths.
5. We need to know that there is a continuing opportunity for the best, most highly trained, and talented youth of our American churches to give their lives to a mutual experience of Christian living among the Indian people. Those who are permitted to enter India in the service of the church will find their reward in a vital experience of Christian sharing.
6. We need to know that the Indian church has reached the stage in which the missionary has become a servant to the Indian people. He is a spiritual partner, comrade, and adviser; a full brother or sister in Christ.
7. We need to know that the Indian church wishes a high degree of independence. It desires control over the selection of missionaries, the disposition of property, the administration of church affairs, the planning of programs, and the use of funds contributed for salaries, work, and institutions.
8. We need to know that the leadership of the church in India generally shrinks from a narrow interpretation of denominationalism. It is reaching out its arms of fellowship, worship, and service to churches in other parts of the world. The issue of church cooperation and even church union is alive and in the foreground.

9. We need to know that time may prove that the particular types of church organization, architecture, liturgy, or hymns to which we are accustomed in Europe and America may not be best suited to the full expression of the depth of spiritual experience and insight of the Indian people.
10. We need to know that Christians in India are a small minority of a population that is exploding within the geographical boundaries of India. This small minority has an influence in Indian life far out of proportion to its actual church membership. Because it is such a small minority, it often represents underprivileged groups. It is strategic in the life of India.
11. We need to know of the contributions the church in India has already made to the world church through her long tradition of spiritual searching and her spirit of reconciliation and renunciation. Travel has not been all on a one-way street toward India. Dr. Grant[5] points out that Christian leaders in India have influenced the spread of Christianity for several hundreds of years. It was the discovery of India that awakened the world to the need for the gospel in faraway places, and it was the early Christian pioneers in India who laid the foundations for the modern missionary approach. Missionary methods used later on other fields were tried and refined by the experiences in India. God may still use the Indian church as an instrument to lead American Baptists and the church at large to deeper spiritual insights and wider fellowship.
12. We need to know that God is moving in his own mysterious way in India. He is among the animistic peoples of Assam. He is bringing light to the depressed classes in South India. His Spirit is moving among the Santals of Bengal-Orissa. He is finding some response among the influential Sudras, the high-caste Hindus, and devout Muslims. The barriers of caste are gradually breaking down. Ancient social customs of questionable nature are giving way. The peoples of India are aroused and concerned by the four horsemen of Hunger, Illness, Illiteracy, and Poverty.

[5] *Ibid.*

How Shall We Respond?

If we privileged church members of the United States know these things, how shall we respond? We may be called upon to retain our interest, even though relationships in the future may be more directly with the Indian churches and Indian Conventions than with our missionary representatives. We may be challenged to continue our support, even though India does not always side with the United States in some of the vital international issues of the day. We may have to recognize that our basic concerns are not so much about property, institutions, and tangible assets overseas as in the things of the Spirit. We may need to accelerate our programs of overseas training and of international fellowship. We may be required to embark on a reoriented informational program which will help the church in the United States to become aware of the tremendous growth in maturity overseas and to redefine our administrative responsibilities in the new relationships.

Basic Missionary Motivation Remains

Does all this mean that the basic motivation which has marked the entire history of missions has been radically changed? Certainly not. Some years ago Dr. Jesse R. Wilson, then Home Secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, pointed out some "rock bottom facts" about our Baptist faith and mission.[6] These conclusions about our mission which were applicable then, are pertinent now, and have been ever since Paul embarked on his first missionary journey: 1) There is the fact of man's need of God. This is a universal need and is in evidence in both India and America. 2) There is the fact of God's initiative in meeting this human need in Jesus Christ, his Son, through the incarnation, the crucifixion, and resurrection. 3) There is the fact that God has chosen human agents to convey his message to the world. His plan through the ages has been to work through men and women both in India and in America who are responsive to his

[6] See Jesse R. Wilson, *American Baptists Overseas.* Valley Forge: American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1954, pp. 84-86.

call and obedient to his will. 4) There is the further fact that God's message is meant for every level of human need. The Christian has a concern not only for eternal destiny but also in man's physical, mental, and social well-being.

With these fundamentals in mind we are made much more confident as we view the revolutionary scene in the India of today. The environmental conditions in which the mission program is carried forward in India may change. Methods, techniques, and programs necessarily must be flexible and easily adaptable to complex situations without too much discussion and delay. Attitudes of incoming and outgoing governments may vary. Some of the changes will be in relationships between the national church organizations in India and the church constituency in America. The missionary strategy of tomorrow will probably be more church-centered. There will probably be a greater two-way traffic between India and the United States through the travel of church leaders, both professional and lay.

The churches in India will have more and more to contribute to the churches in America. This has already been going on. With modern jet transportation and Telstar communications this trend may be so greatly accelerated that the results will be beneficial to both Indian and American churches.

The world-wide church is taking on increased significance. This does not mean that Baptists must forego the possibility of making a distinctive contribution of the great fundamental principles for which they have stood. It will rather mean that Baptists have an opportunity to bring into the thinking of the world-wide church some of the historic principles of the Baptist faith, such as religious freedom.

As the ancient religions of Hinduism and Islam are revitalized, Christians who give themselves to overseas service will be compelled to rethink their own basic theology and philosophy, that as they face their Indian colleagues they may stand on a sure and sound foundation. As Dr. Wilson said, "We are not saved by theology but by faith in what God has done; but theology is the logic of faith and helps us both to understand what God has

done and to proclaim it to others."[7] We must also try to achieve a proper balance between our deepest faith and our ministry to human need. It is not enough to proclaim a limited gospel. The gospel must express itself in meeting human need and in building a new order of relationships. As surely as the status of womanhood in India has been changed by the transforming power of applied evangelism, both Indian men and women have become "new creatures in Christ."

"The Long Stairway"

When Baptists look at the progress India has made and the progress of Christian influence throughout the country, they can appreciate and echo the statement of an Indian community official quoted by the Ford Foundation: "We have climbed the first few steps of a long, steep stairway. For countries at the top, it may seem little enough. For us at the bottom it is momentous progress."[8]

Christian Lamps Burn in India

During my first visit to India a quarter of a century ago an experience in South India was unforgettably etched upon my memory. The village had perhaps fifty houses. The walls and floors of the homes were made of a mixed mud and compost plaster. Goats and children wandered in and out of the tiny homes. White, humpbacked cattle contested for the right of way on the narrow dusty street. Nearby were great, high stacks of grain in a village granary waiting for the harvest festival and threshing time. In the ancient biblical way the grain, after being flailed, would be tossed, to separate the chaff from the kernels.

Darkness descended on the village as the Christian group met for prayer and a service before a modest campfire. Wood and other fuel was to be had only at a premium, so it had to be used sparingly. We listened for two hours to the Indian pastor and visiting guests. We heard fervent, devout testimonies on the

[7] Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
[8] Ford Foundation Report, *Roots of Change.* New York: November, 1961, p. 52.

transforming power of the gospel. All the time the darkness grew more Stygian. We wondered how the people could find their way to their dark homes, for there were cobras, and vipers, and scorpions to be feared. Then, through the darkness, a beautiful transformation began to take place. On the outer wall of each Christian home there was a recessed place to hold one of the pottery lamps with crude wicks, such as were used in ancient Palestine. Someone fired a torch from the campfire, and went along the village street lighting the little oil lamps which had been made ready at the front of each Christian home. Each individual light was exceedingly small in the darkness of the Indian night, but the path to the heart of the Christian village was clearly and plainly to be seen.

So is the pathway to the heart of India. A great cloud of witnesses have marched like a mighty army with their small lamps burning brightly. Onto the stage of India's life and off again have they trod, the Ziengenbalgs, the Schwartzes, the Careys, the Judsons, the Jewetts, the Cloughs, the Phillipses, the Browns, the Boggses, and a host of dedicated pioneers. More lamps are kept burning today by the Singhas, the Longri Aos, the Beparis, the Veeraswamys, the Mookerjis, and hundreds of consecrated leaders. And there are thousands of other Christians who keep their wicks trimmed and their Christian lights glowing because the gospel has been passed to them. In the intense darkness of India's spiritual need their lives shine as beacons. It was the Master who said, "I am the light of the world." It was he who also said, "Ye are the light of the world." This light burns more brightly in the great overpopulated subcontinent of India and in the more privileged America because Christians in both India and America are joining together in a witness to the entire world.

The light is now in India's hand.

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